

comments or suggestions may be emailed to
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V.I.P. Volunteers in Print

Coming Events

* **Karissa's Jewelry Sale Fundraiser – Thursday & Friday, October 22nd and 23rd, 7am-6pm**, medical center atrium.

* **Monthly Volunteer Inservice – “Cook Children's Homeless Initiative”**, presented by Ginny Hickman, AVP, Community Health Outreach and Sally Ward, Case Manager, Homeless Initiative. **Monday, October 26, 12pm-1pm, Pavilion Classroom 5.** Please RSVP by Thursday, October 22nd if you plan to attend. Lunch provided.

* **Volunteer Discussion Group, “In Retrospect”** meets **Thursday, October 29th, 6:00pm-7:30pm**, in Pavilion Classroom 2. Please RSVP to Christy Beck, 682.885.4590 if you plan to attend. Snacks/drinks provided.

Speakers

The volunteer office staff is available to speak to your local social, civic, or religious group upon request. Topics covered usually include Cook Children's program and a brief history of CCMC. A Power Point presentation and/or the DVD “Our Story” can be part of the presentation. Groups must have a minimum of fifteen in attendance. Evening and weekend engagements are a possibility. Please contact Christy Beck, 682-885-4590 or Marie Howell, 682-885-7452 for more information.

Don't Hesitate: Vaccinate

The flu season is back in full force. The time to protect yourself and those you care for is now. Vaccinations and nasal mist for the seasonal flu are available to volunteers through Occupational Health (schedule appears later in newsletter). All are free to Cook Children's volunteers but you must present your volunteer ID badge at the time. Vaccinations are **mandatory** this year for volunteers working among fragile populations: **NICU and Oncology** (cancer) patients. Vaccinations are **strongly recommended** for volunteers who interact with other patient populations, families, and the public. Please take advantage of this opportunity to protect yourself and others.

Cards for Kids Catalog

The all new 2009 Cards for Kids catalog is now available! Copies can be picked up from the volunteer office or mailed directly to you by calling 682-885-5437.

Volunteer Opportunity

Cook Clippers – It is amazing what a fresh haircut or new hairstyle can do to lift a person's spirits. The same holds true for our patients! Cook Children's has two licensed volunteer clippers who come in when a patient requests a haircut, about once a month. The Cook Clippers cut hair, shave heads of patients who are losing their hair, and have even done some wig trims. We would like to add a few more volunteers to the Cook Clipper group. If you are a licensed stylist, please consider adding this role to your volunteer work. Or, if you really like the person who cuts your hair, please pass the word along and encourage them to apply for this placement. Clipper orientation is just one hour and the opportunity to shadow an experienced Cook Clipper exists. Contact Marie in the volunteer office for more information, 682-885-7452.

Mass Flu Vaccination Schedule

Mark your calendars for the upcoming mass vaccinations. Once again, seasonal flu vaccinations will be available as a traditional shot or as Flu Mist. Here are the new dates currently scheduled for seasonal influenza vaccination in the prefunction area of the Hochberger Auditorium:

Thursday, Oct. 1, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 2, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Tuesday, Oct. 6, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Tuesday, Oct. 13, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.



Please note a couple of important reminders about this year's vaccinations. First, everyone MUST have a Cook Children's ID, whether an employee or a volunteer. Occupational Health will not be able to not vaccinate any individual without an ID. This first round of vaccinations will be for seasonal flu only. The vaccinations for H1N1 (swine) flu should be available toward the beginning of November. Stay tuned for more information about these planned vaccinations for the H1N1 (swine) flu as well as for additional dates and locations for seasonal flu mass vaccinations as they are scheduled.

A-B-C-D Award



Congratulations to volunteer **Carolyn Kerr**, our Above and Beyond the Call of Duty honoree for September. Carolyn, a.k.a. "**Sugar Lump**" has been coordinating the Cowtown Clowns group for years. Under her leadership, the clown alley members have visited hundreds of patients in their rooms, brought smiles to little ones walking the overwhelming hallways, and clowned and painted crowds of faces at patient parties and Cook Children's events. Cowtown Clowns is the only clown alley that Cook Children's works with because Carolyn insures that all members are professionally trained clowns and have completed Cook Children's training before service. Carolyn can be counted on to help even at the last minute having frequently come through for us in a crunch. We congratulate and thank Carolyn for her uncommon leadership as well as her devotion to her role as "Sugar Lump".

Got Time?

As we gear up for what will potentially be an extra busy fall and winter season, we want to remind you that if the area where you volunteer happens to be slow or you have accomplished the tasks that you had for your shift, there are always other areas that can use an extra hand. Always check with your volunteer supervisor first to see if he/she has any additional projects for you. If not, never hesitate to call or come down to the volunteer office for more to do. For example, Baby Buddies can be of help in the infant/toddler unit, or any other inpatient or outpatient area that is short a volunteer that shift. There are usually phones that need answering, families that need escorting, paperwork that needs copying or filing, shelves that needs restocking, donations that need sorting, and much more. If you've got the time, we've got a task.

Powerful Poem

Alexandria (Alex) Kuyawa's mother, Amanda, wrote this poem about her daughter's journey through diagnosis and treatment of cancer. Amanda wanted to share this with all of Alex's caregivers.

ALEX'S FIGHT

We walked into the hospital and signed you in that's when we found out the battle would begin
They took you back to check you out; you wondered what the fuss was all about
They ran some test and listened to your chest, that's when they found there were not breaths
They listened again and all around, that's when they said they heard no sound
One doctor left and two doctors came, I wondered would they find the same. Still no breaths, still no sound, so many people all around.
They did an x-ray, what would it say? All I knew is I had to pray
When I looked up the doctor was there, the look he had was an empty stare
The x-ray showed your chest full of fluid, even worse your lung was collapsed
With the results they could do no more that's when they sent you to Cook Children's
Once we were there they did some more tests, that's when they tested the fluid in your chest.
There in your bed you laid so still, only God knew that you were so ill
One week later the doctor walked in, this would be the day reality would sink in
There she stood with tears in her eyes, that's when I knew it wasn't a lie. My baby girl only 2 1/2 had been diagnosed with cancer
I felt so weak I felt so numb who would have thought this day would come
There you were so innocent and pure; about to go through what no child should endure
Surgery and chemo, radiation to follow, my heart has never felt so hollow.
In your bed you laid your head, Harley sat and played with your hair
At that time we figured out what the chemo was all about
In her hands was hair, why is life so unfair
Tears in my eyes I sat and cried, wishing it was all a lie
A patch gone here, a patch gone there, not to long and your head was bare
The only one out of all the girls, lucky enough to have mommy's curls
There I sat day by day wondering if your curls would come back and stay
There you were so young and sweet, was this something you could beat.
Till this day I still can hear all the things you would scream in fear
Mommy, Mommy can't you see all the pain they're causing me
Mommy, Mommy don't you care, are you still standing there
Make them stop, make them go, get off my bed and leave me alone

No more shots, no more meds all I want is to just be a kid
Not that leg not that arm, how could we expect you to stay so calm
Even the finger made your scream linger, that's when I tried to become a singer
We found one song, one song only, till this day I sing it when I'm lonely
When we knew it was time for the shots, the song was always in our thoughts
I would say, you are fine then we would sing "You are my Sunshine".
Weeks went by I memorized your movies, one of them was Sleeping Beauty
You had an itch for Lilo and Stitch; it was number one on your list
Cinderella and Snow White, Beauty and the Beast to say the least
Four months past it was time at last, did the chemo work that fast?
In my arms I held you tight, would the chemo win this fight
They went back in what would they see, we prayed to God it wouldn't be
They took your rib and that is when they saw the spot who would have thought
On your lung a tumor hung, all I could say is she is so young
Lying with you in my arms together we sang our special song
With in time the doctors would find the tumor tested was not benign
One week past I got the call, the words I heard made me ball
Walking in and seeing your face made my heart begin to race
I picked you up and held you tight praying you still had strength to fight
We met with doctors to see what was next and that is when they told us radiation would be best.
They went over the side effects and what to expect, that is when I thought to myself how this could be best.
You have been so strong for oh so long, we even got to have our own special song
You made me proud even when you were loud, I never expected you not to make a sound.
It wasn't long after you started radiation that we would begin to see the side affects mentioned.
It was hard to grasp how someone so young having blisters that covered half her chest could still have such a pretty smile on her face as you did everyday.
Looking into your big brown eyes all I saw was a beautiful little girl with so much life ahead of her and wondered if all your faith and strength is what brought you as far as you were.
After six weeks of radiation they would scan you again, we prayed that this was going to be the end.
It wouldn't be long till they called your name to go back to get the results, the fear I had was too much.
I held you in my arms as I sat in the chair and listened to what was being said. With tears in my eyes I looked at you as I heard the news she is through!
No more chemo, no more radiation just a few more months of medication
Here we are three years later, the longer you go they say you will be safer.
Looking back at all you went through I would have never imagined seeing you the way you are today.
My beautiful brown eyed girl made it to kindergarten, plays soccer, got her beautiful bouncy curls back and best of all is alive and cancer free!

It goes to show don't ever give up when you feel you are at your worst or feel that things could never get any worse, trust me they can. Don't allow statistics to ruin your faith or hope on anything you are trying to fight cause in the end God will always be the one to determine what angels he wants to go home with him and what angels he wants to give more life to. Don't take anything in life for granted, it could all be taken from you in a blink of an eye. Be thankful for what life brings you, good or bad cause in the end everything happens for a reason, and God will never give you anything you can't handle.