A big thank you goes out to our over 2,100 volunteers who give close to 190,000 hours a year to the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC). Volunteers have been a pillar at the MUHC for generations, contributing unwavering dedication and compassion to patient and family care seven days a week, 365 days a year.

In this issue of *Enbref* we have highlighted some of our volunteers from across all the MUHC hospitals, who have dedicated anywhere from 15 to 42 years to our health centre with a smile, sometimes through tears and always from the heart.

Nestled around a table Renata Kozina, Mary Tosoni, Myrtle Neel and Mary Phung (left to right in this photo) sit knitting, sewing and putting together crafts. Besides the clicking of needles, there is a slight hum of chatter. The sun is filtering in through the window and calmness fills the room. (Continued on page 2)

Montreal Chest Volunteer group enhances quality of life for long-term-care patients

Watch out viruses and bacteria — housekeeping has your number  

In the grand scheme of things, housekeeping most likely does not pop to the forefront of peoples’ minds when considering health care. Yet, without a clean hospital, the unseen virus or bacteria can invade and wreak havoc.

So when Joe Vieira started as Manager of Housekeeping at the Lachine Hospital in February 2012 his first message to his new team was: “You are as important as a surgeon or nurse when it comes to patient and family care. Without you, care is compromised.”

With those words repeated over and over to instil a sense of pride and understanding of their role in the healthcare system, he began his mission to help improve the way the Lachine Housekeeping team functioned. Overall, the team was providing a clean environment but Vieira knew he could take it up a notch.

“What was most apparent was the team needed to be supplied with the right tools to create the best outcomes in terms of cleanliness, disinfection and efficiency,” says Vieira. “We were already using these tools across the rest of the MUHC hospitals.”

Vieira started his career at the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) with the Royal Victoria Hospital, he then transferred to the Montreal General Hospital, then the Montreal Neurological Hospital and Institute and finally to the Montreal Chest Institute before landing at Lachine. “I learned a lot with each new hospital I took on and as I gained knowledge I made sure to take it with me wherever I went.” (Continued on page 2)
Actually allows for the broom and mop to shinier. But buffing in the industry this is very old school, " says dust pans where you have to bend down—
updated ways of working, " he says.

"What I brought to the team was more enthusiastic and a great bunch of people."

They call on their friends and families to also help with donations for the cause. Volunteer Marlene Lemieux and Ingrao. Bottom, left to right: Michel Foisy, Michel D’Aleto, Lise Sasseville, Josée Gladu, Soffi e Witt, Genevieve Morrissette. From the top row, left to right: Kenny Senécal, Robert Brochu, Daniel Plante, Teddy Tripody, Joe Vieira, Christopher Marion, Benoit Pinard, Marcel Munoz, Francesco LACHINE HOUSEKEEPING — Continued from page 1

According to Vieira, it’s all the little things that help make a big difference. And I know these housekeepers are making a difference as they contribute to the care of patients and families every day.

For 20 years these dedicated volunteers have come to the Montreal Chest Institute (MCI). Friday mornings to produce every- thing from aprons, bibs, hats, mittens, baked goods to jellies to eventually sell at bazaars and “garage sales” held throughout the year at the hospital. They call on their friends and families to also help with donations for the cause.

Volunteer Marlene Lemieux and Ingrao. Bottom, left to right: Michel Foisy, Michel D’Aleto, Lise Sasseville, Josée Gladu, Soffi e Witt, Genevieve Morrissette.

"For example, they were still using the dust pans where you have to bend down—in the industry this is very old school," says Vieira. "I got them dust pans with long handles. The team were also only applying wax and not sealers, which helps prolong the cleaning. And they didn’t understand the effects of buffing the floor—they thought it just made it shinier. But buffing actually allows for the broom and mop to glide better as the floor is less porous so more dirt is removed.”

Some of the team was up to speed with the modern techniques. For those who needed training he provided a one-on-one demonstration with explanations to give them the opportunity to ask questions.

"I love being involved in giving patients a better quality of life," says Neel, whose mother, who has passed on, started the MCI garden in 1989. "And every year there is at least one patient who tells me they could
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not have gotten through the summer if it had not been for the garden. For me that is what makes it so special; it really changes people’s lives, just as I think the outings do." Tosoni and Koziha feel the same way and also add they enjoy the company. “It is interesting for me as it makes me come out and socialize," says Phung, who bakes 100 samosas for every bazaar and accord-
ing to the other ladies, these are what draw the crowds.

Five hours are devoted from each of the volunteers every Friday morning, but their volunteering has extended to knitting, sewing, crafting and baking at home all days of the week—all in the name of these LTC patients.

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Leo Migneault—for almost two decades he has stood by the children of the MCH

Leo Migneault has four children, one of whom spent much time in the Montreal Children’s Hospital (MCH) as a young child. Thankful for the care he and his family received, he decided to give back in the best way he could: by volunteering.

Migneault started volunteering at the MCH 19 years ago. Today, when he arrives for his shift, he scans information about the patients in the hospital and then sends himself where he thinks he is most needed.

“I mostly take care of babies,” he says. “I change diapers, give them baths, read stories, exercise their limbs. But it really depends on the individual cases how I interact with the children.”

Without fail, every Sunday Migneault rises with the sun and then makes his way to the MCH—rain or shine, special holiday or not. He makes it clear that his family fully supports his volunteering.

“If Sunday happens to be Christmas, I say start the festivities without me because I will be at the hospital,” says Migneault. “My family sees me 365 days a year but those children, they are still in the hospital sick and quite simply, they need me too.”

When asked about his longstanding dedication to volunteering at the MCH, Migneault says, “I get a sense that I am doing good.”

Margaret Wallace has been a volunteer at the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) for over 15 years as a friendly visitor in the Emergency Department and more recently she has also been giving her time in Recovery of the main Operating Room, while always making time for patient committees.

As a volunteer in recovery, Wallace provides patients and their families support and comfort before, during, and after surgery. She acts as a facilitator between the healthcare providers and family members, relaying non-medical information. In the ED she greets patients and families. Wallace is also an advocate for blood donation, every year helping get the word out about when and where there are blood clinics at the RVH.

According to Nevine Fateen, manager of Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal Chest Institute and the Montreal Neurological Hospital volunteers, Wallace’s commitment and boundless energy have earned her the respect of family members, patients, and staff; so much so that they celebrated a very special birthday for her a few months ago.

“I do this because I can. I am retired and I have time to give back,” says Wallace. “I see the positive impact I have on patients and families and it makes me feel very good. When you give, you receive.”

Evelyne Couillard has been volunteering at the Lachine Hospital since 1971. With a smile that never quits, she keeps busy running the little coffee shop, La Cafetière. In addition to managing the inventory and scheduling, Couillard also works two half-days at the shop, which receives help from 14 other volunteers—a close-knit group that likes to swap stories and interact with the customers. The shop is open seven days a week and donates all proceeds to the Lachine Hospital Foundation to improve patient and family care.

This dedicated 72-year-old great-grandmother also helps out with Pastoral Services by comforting many Lachine patients with her caring gestures. During her 42 years as a volunteer at the hospital, she has offered her time in many ways, such as accompanying patients after cataract surgery, playing a friendly game of cards or reading to younger patients.

Madeleine Chantelois, president of the volunteers’ Auxiliary at Lachine Hospital, describes Couillard as a very dedicated volunteer. “She has a beautiful smile, even through difficult times,” says Chantelois, referring to Couillard’s heart surgery earlier this year under the excellent care of Dr. Sunil Garg, cardiologist at the Royal Victoria Hospital, and his team. When the doctor suggested that perhaps she should stay home and rest more, Couillard wouldn’t hear of it— she was anxious to get back to volunteering. “J’aime bien ça! If I didn’t enjoy it, I would stay home!”

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Evelyne Couillard and Marie-Claire Ferreira, right, who also volunteer at La Cafetière.
Leonie Mikael is a research associate in Medical Genetics at the Montreal Children’s Hospital but she also gives her time to the Children’s by volunteering.

“Every Saturday morning I am at the hospital by 7:30 a.m. ready to start my shift with baby cuddling,” says Mikael, who has been volunteering for 15 years providing basic care to children such as bathing, feeding, changing, playing, rocking and convincing them to take their medication. “I volunteer in the General Medicine wards and sometimes in the Neonatal ICU.”

According to Mikael, because she has been around for a while the nurses and doctors always recognize her as a trusted volunteer. “They appreciate you—I really get so much more out of this than I put in.”

As a 5-month old, Mikael herself was hospitalized in a NICU and hooked up to a ventilator for weeks. “There was a chance I would not pull through, but I did and I have always been thankful for that care I received. I guess this is my way of giving back but I also love being around kids,” she says. “I am not kidding myself—I know I am not changing the world; but with every tear I wipe away, every feeding tube I clean, every baby I rock to sleep, I do know I am making a difference.”

With every hug and wiped tear, this MCH volunteer is making a difference.
In the launch of the construction phase at the Glen site, four teams have put a lot of effort into the identification and purchase of equipment specific to the activities of a university health centre.

The McGill University Health Centre Biomedical and Medical Physics teams, in collaboration with the Planning Office, have worked hard to provide the necessary technical details needed to design and build the thousands of specialized rooms that will make up the Glen site.

In addition to this, teams are preparing for the purchase of a large quantity of mobile medical equipment, as well as office and conference room furniture. To give you an idea of the magnitude of this project, more than 180 million dollars’ worth of new equipment has been or is about to be purchased. Although the last two years represent an enormous investment in terms of time and effort on behalf of the Biomedical and Medical Physics teams, the Information Technology (IT) office and the Planning Office, there’s still much work to be done. But with the high-calibre expertise of the people concerned and with their tireless teamwork, we’ll achieve all of our goals.

**Heritage Hero: Herb Bercowitz**

When Herb Bercowitz started working at the Montreal General Hospital (MGH) as director of Hospital Services, he had no idea what treasures lay hidden within its walls. “It was 1988, the year before I retired. I was waiting for the elevator when a colleague told me she had come across some valuable objects,” recalls Bercowitz. “She wasn’t sure what to do with everything, so I started cataloguing it. By the time I retired, my office was full.”

He mentions having found the first MGH admitting book dating back to 1822, an old pulmonary function device, a plethora of old photographs and more. “As I began to collect things, I started interviewing people. I met with physicians, administrators, even a woman who used to be a waitress at the hospital when it was on Dorchester!”

This soon became Bercowitz’s line. “People just kept coming to talk to me about the things they found. I didn’t know what to do with everything, so I started cataloguing it. By the time I retired, my office was full.”

Sometimes just one word can make a difference

–MCH Housekeeper comforts parents in a sea of sadness when he can

Two years ago Mary Rea was walking down the hall of the Montreal Children’s Hospital (MCH) toward the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Her 10-year-old daughter had hit a tree downhill skiing and she was severely injured. As Rea walked with head down, eyes filled with tears, the music of the Italian language filled her ears. Two housekeepers were chatting in Italian as they cleaned. The one man’s voice reminded her of her father, who had passed away years before. She stopped, turned around and decided to join the conversation. It was the beginning of a much-appreciated relationship she forged with Giuseppe Martello while her daughter Laura remained in the hospital.

“He just always seemed to be there when I needed to comfort them. Sometimes just one word can make a difference.”

Martello stresses that his primary function is to keep the MCH clean and disinfected. “When I met Mary I saw she was really down so I tried to help her in the best way I could,” he says. “It is not my job but if I am there and I can help, why not?”

**The MUHC Employee Assistance Program is Available 24/7**

Are you:

- Under a lot of stress: work-related or personal,
- Trying to get along better with a co-worker?
- Struggling with a relationship issue?
- Feeling anxious or depressed?
- Concerned about alcohol, drugs or possible gambling problem?

The Employee Assistance program (EAP) offers immediate and confidential help for all McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) employees. Support is available over the phone, in person, online and through a variety of issue-based health and wellness resources, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at:

- Toll free phone number: 1-800-387-4765
- Online tools and resources: www.shepellfgi.com
- Online counselling: www.shepellfgi.com/ecounselling

**Feel better. Solve a problem. Prevent future problems.**
SAFETY CULTURE
Goal: create a culture of safety within the organization

Examples of how we are achieving this goal:
1. Disclosure Policy guides staff when speaking with a patient and family following an incident or accident
2. All incidents and accidents are reported promptly to the Quality, Patient Safety & Performance Department.
3. Prospective analysis, like a Failure Modes and Effects Analysis (FMEA), identifies potential risks so that they can be avoided before harm is caused.

COMMUNICATION
Goal: Improve communication among care providers and with care recipients

Examples of how we are achieving this goal:
1. A new policy requires all staff, volunteers, trainees, and physicians to use two different identifiers for patients. Examples of identifiers can include patient’s full name (first AND last), medical record number, RAMQ number, birthdate, photo or home address. A patient’s room number must NOT be used for identification purposes.
2. Medication reconciliation helps minimize medication errors. It includes comparing medications taken before admission with those prescribed during admission and at discharge. Discrepancies are resolved and documented.
3. Safe Transfer Communication Tool is a way to communicate patient information at transfer and at change of shift. The tool is based on the SBAR communication model: Situation, Background, Assessment and Recommendation.

WE ARE RELYING ON YOU FOR PATIENT SAFETY
These are two of the six themes covered by the 37 Required Organizational Practices.
For more information please visit the Qmentum banner on the MUHC Intranet site.
Department of Quality, Patient Safety & Performance