

'Just go there'

■ National Volunteer Week celebrated at Willow Trace; volunteerism reaches new high levels in America

By Dee Ann Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER – “Anyone can come in, sit with them, whatever you can do,” says Betty Bryant. “It doesn’t matter what you do, just go there.”

As a volunteer, Bryant is one of several who regularly give of their time and talents to reach out to the residents at Willow Trace Nursing Center in Butler. From Pink Ladies to musicians to beauticians to those who simply come by to visit, those who volunteer do so for a variety of reason, offering a variety of services to the residents.

For Bryant, volunteering simply means reaching out to give residents a little something extra – something to make them feel special. She is one of three local women who visit the nursing home each week to provide hair care for the female residents who live there.

“I started doing it for one lady,” she recalls. “Then with another. It wouldn’t be any particular day; I’d just go there and do their hair.”

Bryant soon began working with two other women who were volunteering at the center, including Virginia Davis and long-time volunteer Lois Kacmarynski.

Kacmarynski has been giving of her time at the facility for more than 27 years.

“I started going there to volunteer many years ago when it was Choctaw General,” she recalls. “Then we moved away for about 3 years. But when we came back in 1979, I started going there again.”

“I started out working in the gift shop,” she adds. “Then they asked me to work in the beauty shop. At first I said, ‘I don’t think so.’ But I said



Celebrating National Volunteer Week
April 15-21

Volunteers were honored during Willow Trace’s annual Volunteer Luncheon on Tuesday. Those who volunteer regularly at the facility include (some not pictured): Jeanette Adams, Betty Bryant, Lois Bolden, Robert Boykin, Henry Bolden, Virginia Davis, Clara Dickinson, Barbara Dubose, Lois Kacmarynski, Suse Robinson, James Tarver, Laura Underwood, Virgie McNair, Mildred Cornelson, Margie Gough, Deloris Kennedy, and Carol Wood.

I’d give it a try.”

“I’ve been doing it ever since,” she adds.

Together, Kacmarynski, Bryant, and Davis provide hair care for at least 14 ladies every Thursday, working from about 8:30 a.m. until noon. While some of the residents can walk to the salon themselves, others must be brought by wheelchair.

“They love it,” says Kacmarynski. “If we miss a day, on a rare occasion, we get scolded the next time. You know, every-

body likes to get their hair done.”

In addition to the hair care team, other individuals and groups regularly volunteer their time at Willow Trace.

In a particularly unique service to the residents, Robert Boykin and James Tarver visit the nursing home residents each Thursday to hand out bananas. The men have been providing the fruit for the residents for several years.

Retired educator Jeanette Adams also

visits the nursing center almost every afternoon to spend a little time sharing her musical talents with the residents, and Pennington minister Shirley Williams travels to the center on a regular basis to provide Bible study opportunities for those who choose to participate. Other local churches, ministers, and individuals also minister to the residents occasionally, with more needed to provide regular faith-based services.

The volunteers at Willow Trace are part of a large number of Americans who volunteer on a regular basis. Although

volunteerism has long been a high priority for many people across the country, their numbers increased dramatically after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Since that time, volunteering has continued at historically high levels, according to the Corporation for National and Community Service, which oversees the volunteer organization AmeriCorps and other programs. Volunteers to the Peace Corps, for example, hit a record high in 2006, and more than 61 million Americans volunteered for charitable and national

service organizations in that year alone — up 20% from 2002. Today, about half of all Americans participate in some type of volunteer activity each year.

In 2002, President Bush called on Americans to dedicate at least two years over their lifetimes, or 4,000 hours, to serving their communities. In order to promote such volunteerism, he created the USA Freedom Corps, a national organization that links volunteers with charities across the world.

Although Americans may volunteer with a variety of organizations from church to community to international charities, the ladies who provide hair care at Willow Trace say that those who would like to find a place where their services are much needed can do just that at the center.

Because of the need to transport some of the ladies by wheelchair, Bryant says that there is a tremendous need for other volunteers to help with the effort.

“All three of us wash and fix hair,” she explains. “Then one of us has to take them back to their rooms. We could use some help, especially from some younger volunteers to push those wheelchairs.”

For Bryant, Kacmarynski, and, volunteering is about following the Golden Rule. It is, they say, simply a matter of doing for someone else what they would appreciate being done for them one day.

“I keep telling the others that they had better come do my hair when I’m living there,” she adds.

“If I was in the nursing home,” Bryant says. “I’d appreciate someone taking time out of their day do this for me. It makes them feel special, like someone cares about them. That’s why we do it.”

National Volunteer Week

April 15 - 21, 2007

VOLUNTEERS

THE PRICELESS GIFT

Through the door walks an inquisitor.
I smile from the station reading “Visitor” and I point her on her way.
At the gift shop she finds, again, I am there.
I understand.
I fill her hand with items reflecting love and care.
On another floor, I give relief to loved ones overcome by grief.
I hold the hand of one in pain and listen as policies are explained.
You see, I have many roles;
many faces; different names in different places.
But wherever there is need for care, look around you - I am there.
These little things along the way I trust make this a brighter day.
Guiding those I encounter on my shift.
I Volunteer. The Priceless Gift.

During National Volunteer Week, we ask that you join us in celebrating the 53 members of the

BRYAN WHITFIELD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

as we thank them for their work and dedication to the hospital and the patients we serve.

Mary Barnes Janice Barton Betty Baxley Margaret Beckett Alice Boggs Elizabeth Bond Linda Burnham Austin Caldwell Margaret Carter Martha Sue Clem Charlotte Criswell Anne Davis Yvonne Dismukes Imogene Eddins Hilda Elmore Sharon Farst Nell Gibson Daphne Glaser Suzanne Grant Georgette Griffith Ronald Hainley	Sandra Harrison Angie Hurns Sandy Huth Genida Johnson Mae Johnson Buddy Jones Virginia Kidd Johnnie Knott Rachel Lamb Louise Leet Jeanette Lowe Betty McCants Jimmie McCollum Betty McCormick Dashiell McKay Juliette McNamara Kate Mutschler Brenda Parr Kathy Patterson Avis Payne Grace Perolio	Ruth Raines Marge Reinecke Dorothy Russell Toni Rutledge Kaye Sawyer Marie Taylor Otha Watson Biboo Webb Edith Whitfield Lee Williams Agnes Willingham
---	--	--

Tombigbee Healthcare Authority
334-289-4000
Demopolis, Alabama 36732
www.bwwmh.com

Shoes needed for foster children

BUTLER — In observance of National Foster Care Month in May, the Choctaw County Department of Human Resources, as well as those in the other 67 Alabama counties, is assisting the Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent Association in their drive to collect shoes for foster children.

The goal of the drive is to collect at least 6000 pairs of shoes for foster children by April 20. Individuals, churches, groups, or civic organizations that are interested in helping with this worthy cause may contact the DHR at 205-459-9725 or 205-459-9711.

Donations should be turned in by Thursday, April 19.

Thank you,
Volunteers
for giving
one of your
most
valuable
possessions
...
YOUR TIME.

For all of your Timber needs give us a call!

**MID STAR
TIMBER
HARVESTING
INC.**
TOXEY, ALABAMA
Ph: (251) 843-6407 Fax: (251) 843-2266
Timber Purchasing - Landowner Assistance

Frank Mozingo Linc: 185*338 Office: 251-843-5407 Home: 251-843-5485 Cell: 334-456-2743	Henry Lovette Linc: 185*201 Office: 251-843-5407 Home: 205-673-2247 Cell: 334-456-2274
--	--

5407005SUN

73660SUN07

CAROLYN'S RECYCLING, LLC

“WE BUY JUNK AUTO'S & IRON”

Hours: 8-4 P.M. Mon. - Fri. Phone: 334-963-4714
Located: Industrial Road off Hwy 10 East in Pine Hill, AL

CASH KING

124 W. Church St. - Butler / 205-459-3206

Let Deborah Merrida help you with all your Check Advance, Title Loan, and Check Cashing needs!

**Loans \$50.00 to \$2,500.00;
1st Loan Free; No Credit Check!**
Also, we're your designated bill payment center.

Hwy 39 N. Meridian 601.484.6001	Hwy. 80 E. Demopolis 334.287.0538	8th St. Meridian 601.484.6063
------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	----------------------------------