

# HIDDEN TREASURE

*The story of the  
St. John Auxiliary*



*There is nothing I could say or do that would be an adequate 'thank you' for the funds you contribute to St. John and for all the many services you provide. You are one of those hidden*



*treasures known or understood by only a few of us, and I am very much aware of the fact that we could not do without you."*

SISTER M. THERESE GOTTSCHALK  
PRESIDENT AND CEO  
ST. JOHN HEALTH SYSTEM

*St. John Medical Center*  
*Auxiliary*

ST. JOHN MEDICAL CENTER AUXILIARY

1951-2001



THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA  
WAS THE FIRST PROJECT OF THE  
ST. JOHN AUXILIARY AND, 50 YEARS  
LATER, IS STILL A FAVORITE PLACE  
FOR MANY ST. JOHN PATIENTS  
AND FAMILY MEMBERS WHO SEEK  
PEACE AND COMFORT IN STRESSFUL  
TIMES. MAY ALL FIND PEACE IN  
THIS SERENE ATMOSPHERE.

*Proposed wording for a plaque to be placed adjacent to Our Lady of Fatima,  
upon completion of the 21st Street Project in 2004.*

It began with 12 women, and now includes hundreds of women and men, young and once young. It started as a way for a few people to help a hospital, and has become the story of a half century of invaluable, unselfish service.



*The original officers of the St. John Auxiliary in 1951. From left, president Margaret Goodpaster, Dorothy Iverson, Irene Mockley, Grace Layman, Anita Alice Hendricks, Jane Moran, Mrs. C.E. Robertson, Bessie Leroux and ex-officio member Sister Mary Virginia Steger.*

2001 marks the 50th anniversary of the St. John Auxiliary. Its gifts to St. John Medical Center over that time have been exemplary – 2.5 million hours of volunteer service, nearly \$4 million raised for hospital equipment and furnishings.

Auxiliary members come from all walks of life, but are bound by a common thread: a willingness to unselfishly give of their most prized possession – time. Many of today's active members have provided more than 30 years of volunteer service; two are members of the group's original charter.



*Auxilians stand in front of the St. John Auxiliary's first gift to the hospital, the statuary for the grotto of Our Lady of Fatima, in 1983. Insert, a postcard of the grotto.*



You will find auxiliary members at St. John everywhere. They greet new patients, assist with dismissals, staff the information desk in the medical center's main lobby and the surgical information desk on the third floor, deliver flowers and run the St. John Gift Shop, just to mention a few of their services.

Most of the hospital's earliest volunteers were Gray Ladies, a name associated with the uniforms earned by women who completed a Red Cross training program designed to provide nursing assistance. The St. John volunteer group got its official start when 12 women,



*In the days before they became disposable, Auxilians stretched gauze bandages that were sterilized and used again.*

ranging from prominent housewives to hospital friends, adopted an organizational constitution on November 5, 1951, 25 years after the opening of St. John's Hospital. It wasn't long before auxiliary members decided to become more cheery in their appearance and changed to pink attire, thus becoming the "Pink Ladies." For many years, gray- and pink-uniformed volunteers worked side by side at St. John.

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*The information desk has been an auxiliary responsibility for half a century. In this 1954 photo, left to right, Jewel Iverson, Genevieve Roberts, Sister Mary Virginia Steger and Ida Beal.*

# MARGUERITE CHAUNCEY

*It's been about a half century since Marguerite Chauncey stretched bandages.*

*"The hospital would use these bandages, then wash them," Chauncey remembers. "Three or four of us would be sitting around a table and stretch them to different sizes. Then the hospital would sterilize them again."*



*Marguerite Chauncey*

*Chauncey has been an auxiliary member since its inception in 1951. At 90, she is the last active original member and has amassed nearly 18,000 volunteer hours (that's two years of service, non-stop) and performed countless jobs, from delivering mail and flowers to performing floor duty, to her current work, pricing items for the St. John Gift Shop in a small room located in pastoral care, next door to the auxiliary's office.*

*Some of Chauncey's labors at the hospital were certainly indicative of their times. Like the two now-banished cigarette machines at the hospital that she filled once a week. Or the portable television sets rented to patients, which had to be hauled up from the basement via usually crowded elevators into the patients' rooms.*

*"We had to move those heavy chairs (in the room) around to get them into a certain place so the patient could see the television," Chauncey remembers. "And the reception wasn't very good, so we had to move them around some more until the patient was satisfied."*

*Fulfillment, in a way, is why Chauncey has been a presence at St. John for 50 years. "I enjoy the people," she says. "It gives you a little satisfaction that your doing something good."*



*Auxiliary on wheels. Mobile hospitality like the sundry-laden Cheer Cart (top, with Lee James and Mannon Staiger) and a reading cart (with, from left, Polly Berghuis, Mary Ella Davis and Daisy Heldmar) were familiar sights in the 1950s and '60s.*



Before the 1950s were over, auxiliary members were serving everywhere within the hospital, including as hostesses in the psychiatric section of the new West Wing and as drivers for hundreds of patients needing transportation for X-rays. By 1959, 430 members performed 33 services for St. John. The year before, 60,800 hours of service were performed. The program had become so successful in such a short time, St. John delegates to national conventions were sought out by other auxiliary members for advice.

Early on, the auxiliary recognized it wanted to be more than just a helping hand. One way was to provide financial assistance to students attending the St. John's School of Nursing. Another was assisting the hospital with its on-going need for state-of-the-art equipment. With true entrepreneurial spirit, the auxiliary set forth in a variety of fundraising ventures.

A Cheer Cart for sundries was started, as were \$1-per-day television rentals to patients (which together brought in virtually all of the auxiliary's income of \$29,794.14 in 1958) and a coin-operated

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*Bobby Reilly (left) and Helen Doerr greet the children in the pediatrics ward.*



*Marguerite Pickett, chairperson of the auxiliary's new gift shop, examines one of the items for sale.*



*Mary Fitzgerald (left) and Ruth Crews helped operate the pharmacy 40 years ago.*



*Still a novelty in the late 1950s, television rentals were a boon to the auxiliary. Here, Ve Lewis (left) and Gwen Duck adjust the "rabbit ears" for a patient.*

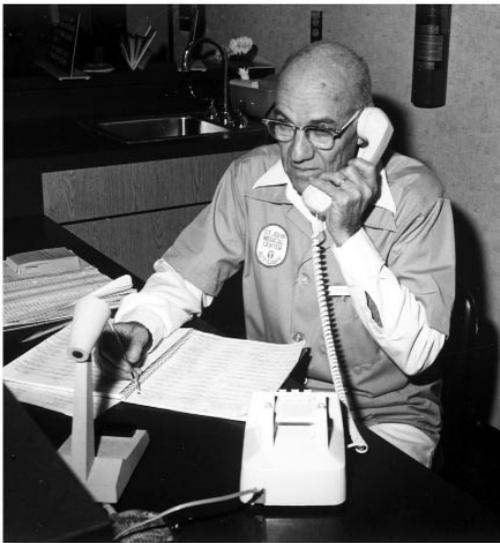
television in the maternity waiting room. A flea market was held for many years on the first Friday of each month, and sold everything from clothing to donuts. In 1960, the auxiliary opened a gift shop at the hospital, generating even more income. To this day it is still the group's primary revenue producer.

As the money came in, the contributions began, beginning with one nursing scholarship. Ultimately, several were available each year, ending only with the closing of the nursing school in 1976. The auxiliary even established a loan department in the early 1960s to assist nursing students.

The earliest St. John donation from its volunteer corps was the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in 1950, before the group's official charter, at a cost of \$2,000. It remains a noble work of art today that will again occupy a prominent place at the corner of 21st Street and Utica Avenue upon completion of the 21st Street Project in 2004.

The first equipment-related donation was \$1,000 in 1952 for a radioisotope laboratory, with another \$2,000 pledged toward its construction. When it was completed in 1954, it was one of the country's first labs for cancer diagnosis, treatment and research. It was just the start of the auxiliary's good will. In later years, fundraising led to purchases of a baby incubator, a heart-lung machine, an integrated radiography system, X-ray equipment, fetal monitoring equipment, mobile intensive care units and cable television in all patient rooms.

The auxiliary also donated mirrored windows to the pediatrics department, created a toy cart from which kids in pediatrics could borrow and, a few years ago, provided elevators for the 21st Street parking garage.



*Herb Needham, wearing one of the auxiliary's pink jackets before the switch to blue.*



*Junior Volunteer Marilie Wood works with a patient in the medical center's skilled nursing unit.*



*Pattie Wheeler, seated center, earns a round of applause after being named St. John Auxilian of the Year in 1980.*

In 1975, with a significant expansion at the hospital already under way, the auxiliary was ready to provide financial help. The group presented St. John president and CEO Sister M. Therese Gottschalk with a check for \$50,000 while pledging another \$150,000 to the effort. When the last payment was made in December 1978, the auxiliary was quick to pledge another \$200,000 toward additional modernization projects.

Of course, as times changed, so did the auxiliary. After more than 20 years of only women members, retired oil sales representative Joseph Reeves joined the auxiliary in 1972. Soon after, the men's jacket color changed from pink to navy blue. The following year, 17-year-old Rusty Clyma became the first teenage male to join the juniors group, called Candy Stripers at the time. His addition eventually led to a name change – Volunteens – to attract more young men, and later to the current title of Junior Volunteers. David and Joanne Brown became the first husband and wife team, joining in 1976 and working Saturday mornings together in the dismissals department.

A tribute to the program's success is the fact that it has had only three directors over its entire 50-year history. Alice Hensy was briefly the first director, followed by Carolyn Cockrum, who served from 1960-1990. Katherine Shinn, the current director, has served since 1990.

Today's auxiliary, nearly 400 members strong, continues to be one of the hospital's biggest benefactors. Among the beneficiaries are St. John's patients, who for 50 years have been greeted by warm smiles and compassion from the women and men in pink and blue.



*Auxiliary president Katherine Shinn (center) with Carolyn Cockrum (left), who directed the auxiliary for 30 years; and St. John president and CEO Sister M. Therese Gottschalk. In 1990, Shinn succeeded Cockrum as director.*



*Today, the St. John Auxiliary is finding new ways to serve. Elizabeth Hicks comforts a patient as part of the recently created Volunteer Visitors program.*

*On the front cover: Auxiliary president June Dobbs (left) and Ruth Toomey (right) give checks for X-ray equipment, nursing scholarships and other items to Sister M. Ursula Renn, head of the St. John's Hospital X-ray department, in 1960.*

# Auxiliary



**St. John Medical Center**  
Medical Excellence • Compassionate Care

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