

## Put a Little Love in the World

by Susan Marlin, St. John Community Health Intern (Central Michigan University)

*Think of your fellow man / Lend him a helping hand / Put a little love in your heart.*

*You see it's getting late / Oh please don't hesitate / Put a little love in your heart.*

*And the world will be a better place / And the world will be a better place / For you and me / You just wait and see.*

—Jackie DeShannon, “Put a Little Love in Your Heart”

When we think of giving to others, we often think of giving gifts at Christmastime. This is the act of giving. But the “art” of giving goes beyond that – it includes giving of oneself in many creative ways. This past Christmas gave me a wonderful story to share with you about this “art” and the power of the human spirit.

I was leading a party for a group of about eight little Girl Scouts in kindergarten and first grade. They were going to play a gift exchange game, and we had asked every parent to bring a gift from their daughter. During the party, one little girl didn't have a present to give, but I hated to exclude her from the game. We went to the gift table and counted the presents, and it seemed that some thoughtful mother had planned for such a problem, because there were exactly enough wrapped gifts for all of the girls at the party. Joyfully, I sent the little girl to the circle for the game. But when the game was over, another little girl had not gotten a present back. Two of the gifts that I had counted on the table had gone together as a set. I had no idea

what to do. While I was stuttering my way through this problem, a third child came up and gave her partially unwrapped present to the girl who didn't have one. I thanked the girl's mother for encouraging her daughter to do such a kind and selfless thing – and the mother told me that she hadn't said a thing. Her 5-year-old daughter had seen a friend with nothing and had willingly given up her toy all on her own.

Of course, the things that we all need during this rough economic time are more than just toys. People need food, clothing, shelter, money for bills, medicine, health insurance, good education, and more. Nearly everyone is struggling in some way or another, and it's hardly Christmastime. Why should anyone be bothered to help someone else, even a friend? I think we should be bothered because we are all struggling together. Even one simple act of kindness and generosity can have overwhelming positive effects. As Paul said:

*Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality.*

-2 Corinthians 8:13-14

We don't need to wait for a special time of the year to celebrate the “art” of giving. I believe that if a small child is able to think of others before herself, we as adults can also all let go of some small thing to help one another. If you don't have money to spare, give things that you don't need or use anymore; if you don't have things to spare, give your time. A couple of hours each month spent volunteering in your community can bring a sense of pride and accomplishment to you – and relief to someone who may have needed that helping hand.



## September Health Observances

*Leukemia & Lymphoma Awareness Month* .....lls.org

*National Cholesterol Education Month*.... www.nhlbi.nih.gov  
www.americanheart.org

*Fruit and Vegetable Month* .....www.cdc.gov/5aday

*September 6-12-National*

*Suicide Prevention Week*..... www.nimh.nih.gov  
www.freedomfromfear.org

*Prostate Cancer Awareness*

*Month*..... www.fightprostatecancer.org

*Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month* ..... www.ovarian.org

## Healthy Choices, Healthy Kids

By Susan Marlin, St. John Community Health Intern  
(Central Michigan University)

In your family, summer may have meant backyard barbecues, picnic lunches, and lazy breakfasts. Routine may have taken a back seat with your kids around all day. But now that school is starting again, it's time to take a look at how your kids do meals and snacks.

Make sure that each day starts out right with a healthy breakfast. This provides your child with energy for the beginning of the day. After school, snacks are a good way to make sure your child is getting proper nutrition. When you eat dinner, make it a family affair. Have your children help with the meal planning and preparation – they will better appreciate what they are eating. Encourage your kids to only eat in the kitchen or dining room, and shut off the TV. Use smaller plates with children so that neither they nor you are tempted to fill a large plate.

Remember that you are a role model for your child. Don't keep sweets around the house and expect that your children won't touch them – it's unfair to expect them to have better behavior than you do. Teach them how to make healthy choices, and give options – but only ones you will be happy with. For example, don't try to trick them into making the "right" choice by telling them they can have either a banana or a cookie for a snack. If you don't want them to have cookies, don't offer cookies. Make the options instead be two healthy things, so that your children are learning about good food choices.

For healthy meal and snack ideas for your kids, check out [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov).

## Emergency Room or Urgent Care: Which Do I Choose?

Dr. Cynthia Taueg  
Vice President, Community Health, St. John Health System

There are many myths about the use of hospital emergency rooms. Some believe that it is a one-stop shopping site where you can get anything you need. Many believe that the care provided is free because the hospital must write off the cost of care. And some think the emergency room is where you are supposed to go after 5 p.m. because there is no place open for care. There are some truths and untruths to these statements.

It's true that hospital emergency rooms provide high quality care for medical emergencies. But what is a medical emergency? Emergency rooms are designed to treat life-threatening conditions that could result in loss of life, a limb or eyesight without immediate treatment. Examples are severe bleeding, difficulty breathing, severe eye injuries, broken bones or symptoms of stroke and heart attack to name a few. Emergency departments are equipped to handle all of these conditions. They are not intended to provide routine preventive care or management of chronic diseases. That is what a doctor's office is for.

Though they will not turn anyone away, the care is not free even if you are not asked to pay anything on the spot. Additionally, there is often a separate charge from any specialty physicians called to treat the patient. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, the average hospital emergency room visit cost is \$1,260. Hospitals and physicians seek to cover the cost of expensive emergency room care and most will send the patient a bill and expect payment unless other arrangements are made.

There is an alternative source for evening and weekend care, Urgent Care Centers. These centers see patients on a walk-in basis and treat conditions that won't cause further disability or death if not treated but require immediate medical attention to prevent the condition from becoming worse or to relieve pain.

Examples include minor cuts, urinary tract infections, earaches, migraine headaches, sprains and rising fevers. The physicians in these sites are licensed and there is a flat fee for services provided. As an example, in Detroit, the East Side Urgent Care Centers charge a flat fee of \$50 for the visit, which covers the cost of care (any prescription medications are additional). They will reduce their flat rate if the patient can prove they are very low or no income and have no insurance. Some insurance plans cover the cost of urgent care visits.

It is important to know that you can save time and money by using lower cost alternative sources of after-hours care rather than the emergency room for non-life-threatening conditions. If you're looking for an Urgent Care provider or a primary care doctor, call St. John Health System at 866-501-DOCS, or contact the United Way at 2-1-1.

## October Health Observances

*Halloween Safety Month* ..... [www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org)  
[Halloween-safety.com](http://Halloween-safety.com)

*Healthy Lung Month* ..... [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)

*National Breast Cancer Awareness Month* ... [www.nbcam.com](http://www.nbcam.com)  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)  
[www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org)  
[http://cancernet.nci.nih.gov](http://http://cancernet.nci.nih.gov)

*National Depression and  
Mental Health Month* ..... [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)  
[www.wfmh.com](http://www.wfmh.com)  
[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

*World Hospice & Palliative Care  
Day - October 10* ..... [www.worldday.org](http://www.worldday.org)  
[www.nhpco.org](http://www.nhpco.org)

## Be Smart – Don't Get Burned!

In 2007, there were an estimated 399,000 reported home structure fires and 2,865 associated civilian deaths in the United States. Fire can spread rapidly through your home, leaving you as little as two minutes to escape safely once the alarm sounds. Most residential fires occur between 8 P.M. and 8 A.M. Make sure everyone in your household knows what to do in case of a fire. Follow PREVENT—

- P:** Plan ahead, install smoke detectors and replace batteries every six months (when you change your clocks). Know the escape routes.
- R:** Realize the danger of smoke; it only takes one to two minutes to succumb to smoke inhalation.
- E:** Establish a safe meeting place to meet outside the burning building.
- V:** Visit and practice your plan often.
- E:** Exit safely – if you have to jump, jump feet first.
- N:** Never stop to collect valuables, save yourself.
- T:** Take care of those who can't help themselves. Infants, children, disabled or elderly will need help.

Visit [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org) for reproducible checklists, safety sheets and other information to keep your environments safe.

Source: [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org); City of Phoenix, National Ag Safety Database

## Be Wise – Immunize

Influenza and pneumonia vaccinations are available starting in October. It is especially important to be prepared for the flu season this year. Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) is available to come to your faith community and administer influenza and pneumonia vaccine. The cost last year was \$25.00 for influenza; \$40.00 for pneumonia. Various insurances are accepted as well as Medicare Part B. You can call Liza at 248-967-8755 or contact your coordinator for assistance and further details.

The pneumonia vaccine has been available for more than 20 years and is recommended for routine use in everyone 65 years and older. Usually one dose is needed, but under some circumstances a second dose may be given. Still, more than one-third of people in this age range have never received the vaccine. A common type of bacteria called pneumococcus is a leading cause of serious illness throughout the world. It causes diseases such as pneumonia, meningitis, and a condition called bacteremia, or sepsis, which is an infection of the blood. Pneumococcus spreads from person to person by droplets in the air.

Each year, U.S. hospitals report an estimated 175,000 cases of pneumococcal pneumonia, 34,500 cases of bacteremia and 2,200 cases of meningitis. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that invasive pneumococcal disease causes about 4,800 deaths annually. The CDC recommends receiving the vaccine if:

- You are 65 years old or older;
- You have a serious long-term health problem such as heart disease, sickle cell disease, alcoholism, lung disease (including asthma), diabetes, liver cirrhosis, leaks of cerebrospinal fluid or cochlear implant;
- You are a smoker;
- Your resistance to infection has been lowered because of disease, transplants, organ failure, HIV/AIDS, lymphoma, leukemia or other cancers; or
- You are an Alaska Native or from certain Native American populations.

Source: Lung Health, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

## What's New?

Welcome to St. Mary's, Royal Oak and St. James, Ferndale. Marcie Skiba is the facilitator from St. Mary's and Catharine Khoury is the RN leading the St. James group. Meg Eib is the Christian Service Coordinator for both churches and was instrumental in getting both programs started. We're glad to have you as our newest partners!

## Dates To Remember:

**September 11-12, 2009** - "Faith Communities: Vital Partners in Shaping a Healthier Future", Health Ministries Association, Inc. - Regional Conference. Best Western Hotel, Sterling Heights, MI. Call 586-263-2107.

**September 15 - November 17, 2009, Tuesdays, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.** "Core Curriculum for Faith Community Nurses", 36 continuing education hours, University of Detroit Mercy. Held at Providence Hospital, Southfield. Cost \$445. Contact your Faith Community Coordinator for more information.

**September 22, 2009** - St. John Faith Community Partnerships Support Group. 8:30 - 11:30 a.m., St. John Oakland Hospital Education Center; 5:30 - 8:30 p.m., Providence Fisher Center. "Pain Management", presented by Jeanne Aichele, Nurse Practitioner, Palliative Care, Providence Hospital. 1 contact hour. Call Sally at 586-753-1484 or contact your Coordinator.

**September 25-27, 2009** - 23rd Annual Westberg Parish Nurse Symposium, "Opening Doors to Wholeness", St. Louis, Missouri. For more information, go to [www.parishnurses.org](http://www.parishnurses.org).

**October 4, 2009** - "Pray All Ways", St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center, 23333 Schoolcraft, Detroit. 1:00 - 7:00 p.m. Sponsored by St. Paul of the Cross and the Dominican Center for Religious Development. \$40.00, includes light dinner. Call 313-387-9574.

**October 6 or November 3** - "Rekindle the Spirit of Caring: A Holistic Approach to Stress Management", St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center, 23333 Schoolcraft, Detroit. 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Fee: \$70.00, includes breakfast and lunch. 6.0 contact hours for nurses. Call 313-535-9563

## Scope and Standard of Practice: Faith Community Nursing

We continue to feature specific standards in each issue of "Faith and Health" so that we may better understand the scope and standards of faith community nursing (parish nursing.)

### Standard 13. Research

**The faith community nurse integrates research findings into practice.**

#### *Measurement Criteria:*

The faith community nurse:

- Utilizes the best available evidence, including research findings, to guide practice decisions.
- Actively participates in research activities related to spirituality and health at the level appropriate to the faith community nurse's level of education and position. Such activities may include:
  - Identifying clinical and spiritual issues specific to nursing research.
  - Participating in data collection (surveys, pilot projects, formal studies).
  - Participating in a formal research committee or program.
  - Sharing research activities and findings with peers and others.
  - Conducting research.
  - Critically analyzing and interpreting research for application to practice in a faith community.
  - Using research findings in the development of policies, procedures, and standards of practice for wholistic patient care.
  - Incorporating research as a basis for learning.

Source: Faith Community Nursing: Scope & Standards of Practice, 2005.

## Who's Responsible?

Sally Sterr, Administrative Assistant  
St. John Health System, Community Health  
586-753-1484 • Fax: 586-753-1488  
Email: [sally.sterr@stjohn.org](mailto:sally.sterr@stjohn.org)