

*Texas Children's Hospital Celebrates*

# National Volunteer Week

**T**exas Children's Hospital celebrated National Volunteer Week April 19-25 by honoring the 900 volunteers who share their time and talents to provide a positive experience for patients and families year round.

Whether helping a child make crafts, taking song requests on *Radio Lollipop*, answering the phones or helping families find their way in the halls, the volunteers make a difference at Texas Children's each day. In 2009, volunteers provided 73,146 hours of service in 120 different service areas.

To honor these individuals, meals were provided to volunteers daily during National Volunteer Week. On April 20, Dr. Mark W. Kline, Texas Children's physician-in-chief, and Tabitha Rice, vice president of Texas Children's Hospital, attended the midday meal to personally thank volunteers for their hard work and dedication.

**“Our volunteers truly are the heart and soul of the hospital.”**

—DR. MARK W. KLINE, *physician-in-chief, Texas Children's Hospital*

“Our volunteers truly are the heart and soul of the hospital,” said Kline. “I’m honored to celebrate our incredible volunteers and recognize them for everything they do for the patients and families we serve.”

At the Texas Medical Center Salute to Volunteers ceremony May 7, Texas Children's Volunteer of the Year Mary Beth Klee was honored for supporting and entertaining

countless hospital patients and families over the years.

“Mary Beth really represents all of our volunteers at the TMC Salute to Volunteers,” said Pat Dolan, director of Volunteer Services and Spiritual Care. “We selected her because of her dedication to our programs and especially for her leadership of the puppet program.”

As a retired grade-school teacher, cancer survivor and puppeteer, Klee's dream was to bring entertaining, high-quality puppet shows to the children and families of Texas Children's. For five years she has been fulfilling her quest as she touches the hearts of everyone she encounters during her bi-weekly volunteer visits to the hospital. “The puppets entertain the whole hospital—patients, parents and staff,” said Klee. “It has been my joy and privilege to bring Texas Children's a puppet program which brings laughter and comfort to all who watch and participate.”

When she is not coordinating the music, training volunteers and scheduling individual puppet visits to patients' rooms, she dedicates her time as a volunteer in the hospital's Spiritual Care program, visiting and supporting patients and families of long-term oncology. “I listen to their stories and try to bring healing and caring comfort to their day,” said Klee. “No money in the world would be enough to pay for the joy and peace of soul I get each week from volunteering at Texas Children's.” 🍷

—by ELIZABETH HIPPI

*Right: Volunteer of the Year Mary Beth Klee administers pastoral care to Leticia and Rodney Raggs. Below: Physician-in-Chief Dr. Mark W. Kline stops by one of the Volunteer Week lunches.*



*Patti Noser and Michael Schramm offer tea to Jennifer Smith at the Volunteer Fair on The Auxiliary Bridge.*