

# Botsford volunteers fill gaps

Botsford General Hospital has joined a handful of hospitals nationwide that are using an award-winning volunteer program to improve the nutritional intake of elderly patients unable to feed themselves.

Under Botsford's pilot program, called BGH Helping Hands, hospital employees, volunteers and physicians support the nursing staff and help feed elderly patients.

Helping Hands not only ensures that elderly patients eat better, the increased social interaction has positive psychological effects as well, according to co-leaders Lois Smith, a director of nursing services and quality as-

urance, and Wendy Graza, supervisor of the I.V./nutrition support team.

Helping Hands is based on the nationally recognized Serving Spoons volunteer program started in 1990 by Greater Southeast Community Hospital (GSCH) of Washington, D.C.

Program developer Lester Scheuermann, GSCH director of geriatric assessment and planning, recently completed a one-year tour of hospitals nationwide to promote the program. His tour, which included a stop in Michigan, was funded by the American Hospital Association's Baxter Fellowship for Innovation in Health Care Management.

"Our goal is to address clinical malnutrition," said Scheuermann.

"We found that we needed to spend more time assisting patients with meals. Because nurses don't always have the 45 minutes to an hour needed to spend helping these patients with meals, we turned to volunteers."

At Botsford, the BGH Helping Hands program is provided five days a week for elderly patients. A total of 44 volunteers — hospital employees, physicians and volunteers from the community — have so far donated time to assist Botsford's patients with lunch.

"It's a win-win situation," said Lois Smith. "Research has shown

the program enhances the patient's nutrition and increases their self-esteem. Patients have increased social interaction and decreased depression."

Botsford has plans to run the program on a hospitalwide basis for lunch and dinner. To do so, they will need to triple the number of volunteers. To volunteer, or for more information, call Smith or Graza at 471-8735.

Botsford General Hospital is a 336-bed osteopathic teaching hospital serving Farmington Hills and surrounding communities. It is affiliated with Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

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# Support groups meet needs

An 8-year-old boy is very angry. He draws pictures in red and black. Although he won't admit it, his mother is dying of cancer. Yet his sister is as cheerful and bubbly as a 6-year-old should be.

On the day of their mother's funeral, the boy draws a picture of himself in yellow, a color which symbolizes happiness. His sister, however, is very sad. She doesn't understand why her mother has left.

Children who lose someone close may deal with grief in unique ways. It is important that these children be allowed to express themselves and understand that their feelings are normal.

Hospice of Southeastern Michigan's grief support programs for children provide an opportunity for children to explore their feelings and share experiences with each other.

"Children are so open, honest and relatively simple in telling us how they feel through their actions, drawings and behaviors,"

said Anne Byrne, a registered nurse and director of Children's Hospice.

Each group is led by a professional, experienced in helping grieving children. Using art, puppets, stories and play, the group leader helps children express their grief and develop coping skills.

During weekly sessions, children talk about their loss and share memories of their loved one. By acknowledging their grief, children gain a greater understanding of life. They realize that their feelings are normal and healthy.

"When children share their experiences of losing their loved ones in a group setting, they feel they are not alone," observed children's grief counselor Tasneem Kapadia. "The group provides a safe environment to share their grief."

Grief support groups are open to children ages 6-15 who have a family member or friend who is terminally ill or has recently died.

Counselors are available to meet with parents or guardians at any time to discuss their child's concerns and progress.

Groups are small so that children can receive individual attention. Programs last six weeks and meet throughout the metropolitan Detroit area. Registration is required but there is no fee.

The Children's Hospice bereavement program, established in 1992, has provided to more than 70 children. Parents, children and area health care providers commend the program, said Byrne.

For more information on dates and times, or to register, call Byrne at Hospice of Southeastern Michigan at 559-9209.

Hospice of Southeastern Michigan is community resource on living with terminal illness, death and grieving. Hospice also offers grief recovery seminars, grief support groups and special programs, such as coping with the holidays after the loss of a loved one.

# Teachers host piano recital Jan. 5

The Livonia Piano Teachers Forum will host pianist Louis Nagel in a lecture recital on Wednesday, Jan. 5.

Nagel will perform Beethoven's "Tempest" Sonata, Opus 31, No. 2 beginning 9:30 a.m. Jan. 5 in Hammell's Music Store, 15630

Middlebelt in Livonia.

Nagel has coupled his performing career with an equally distinguished academic one, having served on the piano faculty at the University of Michigan since 1969.

Most recently, Nagel has

played concerts and given master classes in Jerusalem, St. Petersburg and in Taiwan.

This past summer, Nagel performed at Meadowbrook for the Steinway Society and in the Chamber Music Workshop at the University of Michigan.



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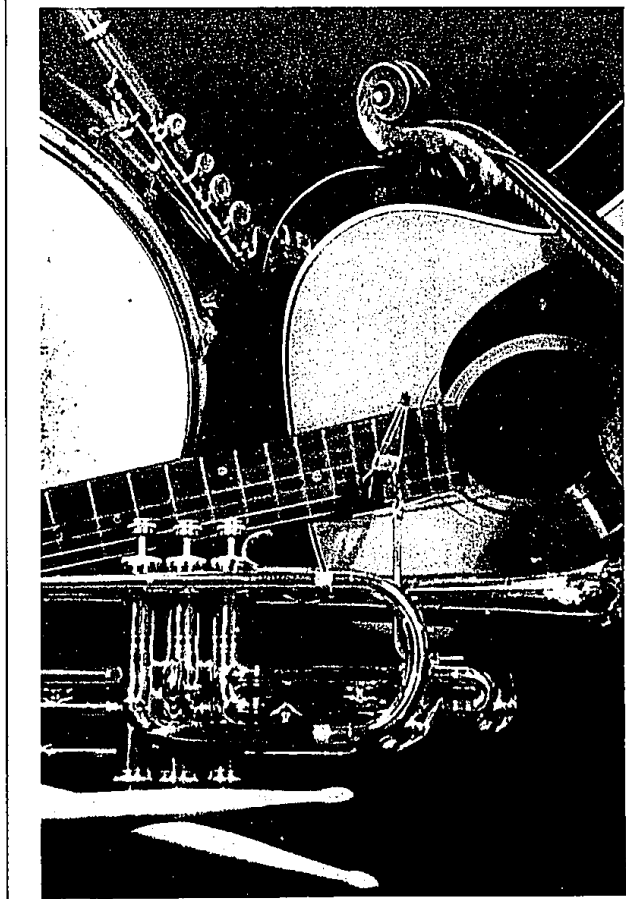
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