

F A C T S & F I G U R E S

Produce section

For 75 years, DHMC has benefited from a cornucopia of donations and services from members of its Auxiliary.



\$1,578

Value of produce donated to Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital in 1935 by the volunteer members of the Auxiliary

1933

Year the Auxiliary was established

250

Number of active Auxiliary volunteers as of the 1950s

1968

Year the Auxiliary started the Pink Smock Gift Shop

\$335,644

Net receipts generated by the Pink Smock Gift Shop in FY08

100%

Percentage of those receipts that go to the Auxiliary and to grants for patient-care improvement projects at DHMC

4,000

Number of tulip and daffodil bulbs planted by Auxiliary volunteers on DHMC's new Lebanon campus in 1991

500

Number of currently active Auxiliary volunteers

54,156

Number of hours of volunteer service they provided in FY08

SOURCE: DARTMOUTH-HITCHCOCK MEDICAL CENTER AUXILIARY

DHMC Auxiliary marks 75 years of service as a "fairy godmother"

It took 75 years and there was no magic wand involved—just a lot of hard work. But the DHMC Auxiliary turned a pile of pumpkins and squash into something as splendid as Cinderella's coach (and more long-lasting). Surely that qualifies for fairy-godmother status.

Anniversary: The transformation wrought by the Auxiliary is detailed in *A Gift of Service*, a book marking the group's 75th anniversary. The organization's genesis lay in a need to generate cash donations for Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital during the depths of the Depression.

There was already an elaborate system by which residents of nearby towns delivered gifts of produce each fall for use in the Hospital kitchen. Donation Day, as it was called, was a matter of town pride, as residents competed to see which towns mustered more gifts. The squash, cabbage, and potatoes that piled up on the MHMH lawn were a great help in feeding patients through the winter, but what the Hospital really needed was money.

Day: So raising funds was the Auxiliary's charge when it came into being on October 21, 1933, that year's Donation Day. Anyone who dropped off produce automatically became a member of the new group, which went on to hold benefits and an annual fund drive. Two years later, in 1935, the Auxiliary brought in cash contributions totaling \$2,510.

Today, by contrast, the Auxiliary raises over \$300,000 a year and marshals a cadre of 500-some volunteers active in about 50 programs. Such splendor has come with a price, however. The Auxiliary's current president, Barbara Blough, says there was a sense of belonging in the group's early years that she'd like to recapture. Blough, who is director emerita of alumni affairs for DMS, has been an Auxiliary volunteer since her retirement in 1990. One of her goals as president is to make today's hundreds of volunteers more aware of the organization's history. The publication of the book was one means of doing that.

Shop: "There are so many areas into which volunteerism has extended. It makes us very different from other hospitals," says Blough, who—with her late husband, Foster—was named Quarter-Century Volunteer Honoree in 2008. For example, although many hospitals have a gift shop, DHMC's Pink Smock Shop has always had volunteer buyers as well as cashiers. All the shop's net proceeds either support the work of the Auxiliary or are awarded in grants for patient-related equipment, supplies, or programs not funded by the institutional budget.

The Auxiliary also underwrote construction of the chapel when the new Medical Center was built in 1991. And many of the works of art in DHMC's public spaces were purchased with Auxiliary gifts.

But as valued as the organization's dollars have been, it's the volunteer hours that have made

the biggest difference—from the smiling faces at the information desks to the friendly escorts who help patients find their way from one department to another. Auxiliary volunteers are present wherever patients or their families need support—from the Infusion Suite to the Emergency Department. They offer art therapy, play music, and deliver flowers and books.

Bingo: Volunteers also run a weekly bingo game—piped in to every patient room over closed-circuit TV. That effort alone entails assembling 250 packets of game supplies, emceeding the game itself, and then delivering prizes to the winners.

One of the most unusual volunteer jobs at DHMC was conceived and filled by chemistry professor John Amsden when he retired from Dartmouth. He set up shop as a Medicare consultant for patients when the program began in 1966. His model was later promulgated to hospitals nationwide by the federal agency that oversees Medicare.

Among the Auxiliary's newer programs are two that require special training of volunteers: Befriend, which offers peer support to patients with breast cancer, and No One Alone, which serves patients in the palliative-care program.

Work: “We now take for granted what we have in DHMC,” says Blough. “I’d like people to realize the long period of development.” She knows there’s no magic wand—and that the success of the next 75 years depends on today’s hard work.

ROSEMARY LUNARDINI



DHMC's Auxiliary was born of a tradition called Donation Day, when local farmers dropped off harvest surplus, which was fed to patients through the winter. On this early Donation Day, the Hospital lawn is piled with boxes and bushels of produce.



In 1934, the Auxiliary purchased a book cart, which volunteers wheeled around to patients in their rooms.



In 1968, the Auxiliary opened the Pink Smock Gift Shop. Here, Mary Burke and Betty Jordan ring up an early sale.



Today, the Auxiliary raises over \$300,000 a year and fields 500-some volunteers. Barbara Blough, right, the organization's current president, and the late Foster Blough, left, were named Quarter-Century Volunteer Honorees earlier this year.

THEN & NOW

A reminder of the pace of change, and of timeless truths, from the Fall 1977 issue of this magazine:

Dr. Maurice Costin, DMS Class of 1940, shared some recollections of Dr. William Bodwell, Class of 1909. Their paths had crossed “when Dr. Costin set up his practice in Framingham [Mass.] in 1948 and over the years they exchanged stories of their days in Hanover. Dr. Costin [wrote in 1977] that ‘Dr. Bodwell . . . used to have several jobs while working his way through Dartmouth. They included barbering, bartending, washing dishes, waiting on tables, helping Dr. Gilman Frost deliver calves on his farm, and taking care of Professor Emory’s horses.’”



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Number of students in the DMS Class of 2009 who grew up on a farm

MARK WASHBURN