

Acceptance Speech for 62nd Presidency
2009 TAHV Installation General Session
June 7, 2009
Marriott River Center Hotel, San Antonio

Do you remember the joy of planning a journey or vacation trip with your family – perhaps a trip to Grandmother’s house or maybe a car trip to the mountains? First you decide the destination of the journey; you map it out; then you make preparations for packing and then finally the big day arrives!! You are excited and filled with anticipation as to what this journey will bring!!!! Well, this is exactly how I am feeling this morning! Both excitement and anticipation!!

My journey begins today and with honor and sincere humility as I accept the Office of the 62nd President of the Texas Association of Healthcare Volunteers and I thank you for this opportunity.

The history of our organization began at an organizational meeting of the “Women’s Auxiliary to the Texas Hospital Association” on February 23, 1944 with thirteen charter members represented. The first auxiliary to join this association was Women’s Auxiliary of Christ the King Hospital of Vernon, Texas. This auxiliary hospital is the hospital where I was born. Let me just say, my birthday was not the same year of the membership!! Now isn’t it ironic that the first auxiliary is my hometown, a rural North Central Texas town to have the distinction of being the first!!

The president, president-elect and first vice president have the responsibility to travel the state to participate in our district meetings. This past year Janie drove Melva and I over 3400 miles during the four week tour. Our tour allowed us to visit with 152 healthcare organizations that were represented with a total of 1,371 volunteers and administrators present. Of the 244 total hospitals as members of TAHV, we had 62 percent reporting statistical numbers. Of this 62 percent, we show 18,548 senior volunteers working a total of over 3 million hours. Scholarships of 970 gave a total of over \$1 million dollars helping to assist costs for students in the medical field. Cash gifts to our healthcare facilities showed over \$5 and a half million dollars. Just think what the figures would be if the other 38 percent would have sent their numbers to be included. Needless to say, volunteers are essential to our healthcare facilities. This year we hope to

encourage every auxiliary/volunteer group to submit their numbers for a better accuracy of acquiring our statistical reports.

Just a bit of important figures for you to do the mathin 2008 the average value of donated time by volunteers was \$20.25 per hour. You do the math of over 3 million hours given by senior healthcare volunteers at \$20.25 an hour!! Continue to do the math if the other 38 percent had included their numbers. These numbers are just unbelievable!! Now, aren't you filled with pride and don't you feel honored being a member of an organization that provides so much to healthcare facilities throughout our state!!! Congratulations!

I once read a quote that states, "Leaders don't force people to follow – they invite them on a journey." As Melva, Sherry and I make our journey across the state this fall to participate in the ten district meetings, we invite you to attend one of these district meetings. Our journey begins in Waco on Sept. 23 and ends October 23 at The Woodlands. We encourage each of your groups to attend this educational day to meet other volunteers in your district and learn what is happening in their organization.

The volunteer groups hosting and the dates for the district meetings are posted on the TAHV website: www.tahv.org. I invite you to visit our web site for information about TAHV.

If you have important or exciting events happening in your organization, we would enjoy your sharing this information with us. The way to inform other volunteers throughout the state is the TAHV newsletter, the *Outlook*. The *Outlook* is published three times a year and each member organization receives a copy. It is also published on the web site. Verneta Baxter is chairman of the *Outlook* and her address can be found on the web site. Also, please make a note to put Verneta on your mailing list to send her a copy of your newsletter.

The incoming president has the honor of choosing a logo and theme to use during the term of that presidency. The logo and theme is shared with volunteers throughout the state to serve as a bases for speakers at the district meetings.

In 2006, whenever the Concise Oxford English Dictionary announced that the word “time” was the most often used noun, it did not seem surprising. We live in a world where people are obsessed with using days, saving minutes and trying to find more hours in the day.

One of our greatest treasures in life that every one of us shares is that of our time! We are each given the same twenty-four hours, but how we choose to spend those hours, is our own personal choice. The value of time is our most precious and limited commodity. How you spend your time reveals what is planted most firmly in your heart.

The Bible states..... **“To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven.” Ecclesiastes 3:1.**

Healthcare volunteers choose as a purpose under heaven to devote countless hours of personal time. Their “timeless dedication” is freely given because of their unselfish desire to care for others.

So this year, I have chosen my logo to be -----

2009-2010 Texas Association of Healthcare Volunteers.....“Timeless Dedication.”

Symbols to represent this timeless dedication include any type of timepiece: clocks, watches, sundials, hour glasses, sun, moon, stars, calendars.

Because heart disease continues to be the leading cause of death in the United States, more than cancer or any other disease, the theme I want to present this year will be **“Maintaining a Healthy Heart.”** Each year there are more than a million heart attacks that occur in the United States.

Fortunately, it is now easier to survive one, thanks to medical advances. But wouldn't you rather

- Avoid the trauma,
- Disability,
- Hospital confinement,
- And risk of death caused by heart trouble?

You may avoid critical illness caused from heart disease with important measures. These important measures include

- Education.....know the warning signs
- Diet.....making smart choices
- Exercise.....developing physical fitness program
- Medication.....taking the correct prescriptions
- Procedures/treatments.....catheterizations...pacemakers...surgery
- Research.....new drugs
.....new devices
.....new therapies

These measures to help prevent heart disease will be discussed during our fall tours. My challenge to you will be **“Are you tough enough to prevent the pain of a heart attack?”** It is my goal to assist you on this health journey to make a change in your lifestyle to prevent the pain of a heart attack!

For all of our healthcare volunteers, I’d like to say thank you for being present every week in your hospital, whether it’s in the waiting room, emergency room, at the front desk, or in the gift shop. Thank you for answering the call to serve with dedication, skill, and a passion to heal.

When it comes to our health, stories of health, stories of hope and healing can comfort, inspire and motivate us.

Dr. Martin Luther King said, **“Everyone has the power of greatness...Not for fame but greatness because greatness is determined by service.”**

You do have the power of greatness because of your service in your healthcare facility. You join with other TAHV members, both men and women, who over the past sixty plus years have given unselfishly of their time and dedication to the service and carrying of others.

To honor and offer our appreciation to those who have led our organization throughout past years serving as president of TAHV, I invite the TAHV past presidents to please come forward so we may publicly say thanks for your timeless dedication, leadership and service:

Past Presidents in Attendance: Verneta Baxter, Pat Fortune, Nancy Hays, Lorraine Mannering, Marge Rode, Shirley Volluz, Bob Zamen

Cookie Braddock, Gigi Dubois, Mary Gayle Stromberger, Jan Temple – not present

We appreciate each of you for your leadership and commitment to encourage and assist in providing educational opportunities to enhance the delivery of healthcare services to our fellow volunteers. Thanks from all of us.

To the Hospital Administrators, Directors of Volunteers Services, Volunteer Coordinators....We say thank you for your leadership and guidance to our volunteers

Thank you for your positive impact in your duties of charting the course in directing us toward making a difference in the lives of others.

Success is a very personal thing, but I think most people would agree that true success is about being fulfilled. And, there would be no greater feeling to look back toward the end of your life with a **“smile in your heart”** knowing that you made a positive difference in the lives of others.

Yes, as a healthcare volunteer, you may pay tribute to yourself because you do put a “smile in the heart” of others.

To quote Carl Sandburg, **“Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent.”**

I look forward to the ensuing year and sharing the journey set before us as we face challenges and as we celebrate achievements. We are caring and have

compassion for our TAHV membership as we are united to lead and work together for better healthcare. Our commitment, made by a bond of your membership in TAHV, is to do all we can to support you and our fellow volunteer groups.

My husband, retired from United Parcel Service, always quoted Jim Casey, founder of United Parcel Service as saying **“determined people working together can accomplish anything.”**

Thank you for your day-in and day-out of hope, generosity and courage. You gift us with sharing your joyful and loving expertise and love. We may be facing challenging times, but we as volunteers can do together what none of us can do alone.

Thank you for your compassion, your ‘timeless dedication,” and for choosing to be a healthcare volunteer.

Pat Neatherlin
President