



# The Server

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*e-newsletter – Issue No.01, June 2016*

Welcome to the new VolServ E-newsletter 2016! Our aim is for VolServ and all its members to keep in contact through these issues. VolServ has started its tenth year of volunteering services. We have grown and would like to grow more. Now, with Sir Anthony Mamo Oncology Centre added to Mater Dei Hospital, more volunteers would be a blessing. So it's up to you, our "established volunteers", to do your best to recruit as many as possible. Finally, SOS Malta would like to thank all VolServ volunteers for their constant dedication, commitment and unselfish giving of your time. Keep up the good work!

*pat*



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## VolServ ....

### an Expression of Active Citizenship

Volunteering and civil society organizations have a value for individuals, communities, the economy and society at large as visible expressions of solidarity. At the same time, volunteering and civil society organizations help with the promotion and facilitation of social inclusion, building social capital and producing a transformative effect on society. The value of volunteering and active citizenship also stands in the development of a thriving civil society that can offer creative and innovative solutions to common challenges. Moreover, volunteering and active citizenship trigger economic growth and as such deserve specific and targeted monitoring and measurement in terms of both the economic and social capital that they create. VolServ is a good practice, acknowledging and supporting the role of the volunteer in the hospital bridges the gap between the authorities and its citizens. VolServ supports and recognizes the service our volunteers play to achieve a more inclusive society and to foster active citizenship through people's empowerment—it is an outstanding source of learning and a true expression of Active Citizenship.

*By Claudia Taylor East (CEO SOS Malta)*

### Developmental Training - First Aid Session

VolServ Volunteers attended a First Aid Session held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2015. This was conducted by Mr Kenneth Scerri, a nurse from the Accident and Emergency Department of Mater Dei Hospital who forms part of the Community Education Team Malta.

Mr. Scerri explained that as volunteers working at the hospital, we need to be aware of certain symptoms which we might encounter in patients visiting hospital. Some points included: The proper use of emergency line 112; the Ambulance Service Emergency; First Aid priorities; how to assess a patient to determine his state of consciousness; the correct positioning of a patient who has fainted or collapsed and the importance of remaining with the person until the ambulance team arrives.

Questions were asked to clarify our understanding and these were kindly answered by Mr. Scerri. All those who attended thanked him for the useful advice and his time.

*Josette Scicluna*





## Gratitude Reception

The Westin Dragonara was once again the venue for last year's **Gratitude Reception**. This was held on Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2015.

The hall allocated to us was brilliantly decorated with balloons in the **VolServ** colours on each and every table. Quite a good number of members turned up for this event and it all went amazingly well. Well done to the organization team!

Claudia Taylor East presented certificates and awards to many of our deserving members. Good food and entertainment both helped to make the evening a memorable one. Special thanks to our sponsors Lombard Bank plc.



**Certificates, Badges and Christmas gifts were distributed**







LET THE FUN BEGIN!!





# MAKE IT WORK

## .....FOR YOU

The festive seasons bring hassle, worry, stress- and fun. But have you ever thought that much of what we do to prepare for the festive season is actually good for us? In fact so good that we should keep these practices up the whole year through. So keep doing a little of what you fancy - it is good for you.

Here are a few tips:



Singing in a group, is a great workout for our hearts and lungs. It regulates pulse and heartbeat and helps deepen breathing. Sing carols or karaoke, or, even better, join a choir, any time of year.

Use your creative “genius”. Flower arranging, cooking, decorating your home—the list is endless. This contributes to our mental well-being and is very therapeutic.



Get crafting: Throughout the year focus on a craft, like knitting or crochet or anything that requires you to focus. This helps to do away with negative thoughts because you have to concentrate on the task at hand.



Share meals together; it has been proved by research that families who eat together are happier and healthier. Spend time with family and friends, if you can. This is one we really should make time for. A feeling of belonging, a shared sense of fun and a sense of community are all great for our well-being, both mental and physical. If you can't be with family or friends, phone, text, email or write a letter- whatever it takes to keep in touch.

How about watching or re watching your favourite comedies? Laughter lowers blood pressure, increases blood flow to the heart and pumps more oxygen into the blood. Some studies suggest that laughter may help prevent heart disease.



Above all, be generous - both giving and receiving trigger the release of “happy” chemicals, dopamine and oxytocin, which help to relieve tension. Cultivate “kindness” throughout the year. Do something thoughtful for someone, visit a lonely neighbour, make that phone call, help with a chore or lend an ear to a worried friend. Be generous with your time. It is the best gift of all.

**And then, of course, there's volunteering.....**

*By Anna Maria Mallia*

## My Experience as a VolServ Volunteer



Four years ago I was accepted by SOS Malta as a Volserv volunteer at Mater Dei Hospital.

After two brief stints at the Operating Theatres and Booking Office, I moved on to Medical Out Patients 1 (MOP 1) at the reception where patients are registered and directed to different clinics operating on that particular day. I usually attend on Wednesday mornings when five and or six clinics operate simultaneously.

Honestly, it is my pleasure to work alongside the regular staff who, although young in age, are very mature in their approach to the public. It is always very busy with both telephones ringing incessantly with calls from patients airing their difficulties and seeking a word of comfort. We always try our best to satisfy their needs.

Occasionally, I am sent to different parts of the hospital to collect files which are required by our consultants on that particular day. I also help to refer incoming mail to its correct destination. Although it is very hectic at the reception of this very busy section, I am content because I know my efforts are appreciated by the staff.

Most important of all is the fact that I am helping patients in their particular needs.

*by Frank Galea*

## Darbtejn Insiru Tfal

Nixtieq naqsam magħkom l-esperjenza tiegħi bħala voluntier mal-VolServ. Irrid ngħid li l-voluntarjat hu ħafna għal qalbi u ilni midhla tiegħu sa mill-1979 meta kont volunteer mal-Caritas Malta.



Nistghadu għall-hut  
bħalma kont  
nagħmel fi tfuliti

Ilni ġa sentejn mal-VolServ. Għal-ewwel tlabt biex naħdem fis-Psychiatric Unit minħabba li nħobb ħafna nagħmel il-crafts. Izda kien hemm bżonn ta' voluntiera fil-librerija u bdejt naħdem hemm.

Hawnhekk mal-ewwel irrankajt u bdejt l-ewwel bil-kisi tal-kotba u issa qed nagħmel sorting tal-magazines li jgħibilna l-pubbliku.

Waqt il-Gratitude Reception tas-sena l-oħra, Claudia Taylor-East introduċietni mal-Manager tas-swali tat-tfal u wrejtha x-xewqa li nibda naħdem hemm. Wara il-festi bdejt nattendi iċ-Children Out Patient Unit. U hawn bil-logħob li nagħmel mat-tfal ta' haddiehor ergajt dħalt mill-ġdid fid-dinja tat-tfal.

*by Peter Borg*



# THAT'S ME !!! - PHOTO GALLERY



Let's Meet April 2015



Malta Police Band at MDH –2015



Awareness Campaign—October 2015



Oncology Training Session—2015



MDH Talent Show—October 2015



Smart—Healthy Eating 2015



SAMOC—migration - September 2015



## ***Are We Having a Senior Moment?***

What is a Senior Moment? The Free Dictionary describes a Senior Moment as an instance in which one is unable to remember something or to focus adequately on the matter in hand.



As we get older, we often experience these odd and unusual Senior Moments. How many times have we walked into a room and forgotten the reason we went there for? Or opened the fridge and could not remember what it was we needed from there? We all tend to have these odd moments and very often they are hysterically funny in the recounting of them.



Don't let these Senior Moments worry you. Many famous people have experienced (note the word 'experienced' not 'suffered'!) Senior Moments and amongst these we can list Einstein, Lincoln, Beethoven and Newton. One famous Senior Moment on record is "Do you need different glasses to find your other two pairs?"

Send us your own story of a particularly funny Senior Moment episode. We'd love to hear it. It could have happened to you or your mum, or a neighbour. Let's share our Senior Moment; let's show the world that we are not alone.



*By Margaret Andrews*







## ***FUNDRAISING***

As you are very well aware, Volserv does fundraising three times during the year: at Christmastime, Eastertime and Mother's Day. Maybe at times there may be certain individuals who ask if we need to do any fundraising at all.

I can well assure you that the answer to this query is a definite YES. With the reasonable, and at times little, profit that we make, we are able to keep giving a good service at Mater Dei Hospital. Some of the funds go to provide items necessary for crafts and cooking at the psychiatric ward. Similarly, some funds are used to provide items for grooming and manicure services. Besides, some of the money that has been raised was spent on a new trolley to serve drinks at the Oncology Centre.



Organising fundraising is no joke at all. A lot of thinking and hard work goes into the organisation, especially finding the right items to sell that will appeal to customers. Here I feel that we should show all our appreciation to Pat Debono, who really puts in a lot of work and thought to make fundraising successful. I must also thank all those

helpers and volunteers who are always ready to lend a helping hand before and during fundraising.

With regard to those who still feel a bit indifferent, I suggest that they think about it and the next time around come forward to offer their help. Fundraising should be regarded as another means of contributing our assistance and energy for the benefit of patients at Mater Dei. It also serves us as an opportunity to make people more aware of Volserv and all its work at the hospital.

*By Mary Ann Ellis*





***Gluten free and Dairy free Chocolate Cake – with Manuel***

**Ingredients**

**For the cake**

- 1 ripe avocado, peeled and stone removed
- 300g light brown sugar
- 350g gluten-free flour
- 50g gluten-free cocoa powder
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda (gluten-free)
- 2 tsp baking powder (gluten-free)
- 400ml soya milk
- 150ml vegetable oil
- 2 tsp vanilla essence (gluten-free)
- ¼ tsp salt

**To decorate**

- 200g dark chocolate, chopped (Gluten-free)
- 150ml vanilla or plain soya yogurt

**Method**

Grease and line 2 x 20cm sandwich tins and put aside. Place the avocado and the sugar in a food processor and whizz until smooth. Add the rest of the cake ingredients to the bowl and process again to a velvety, liquid batter. Divide between the tins and bake in a hot oven at 160°C for 25 minutes or until fully risen and a skewer inserted into the middle of the cakes comes out clean. Allow to cool down completely. When ready, place the chopped chocolate in a bowl and melt in a microwave till soft. Carefully stir in the soya yogurt to make a ganache. Use half of the ganache to sandwich the 2 cakes together then spread the rest on top and serve.

***Special thanks to Manuel, who gave us permission to publish his delicious recipe..THANK YOU!!***



Next issue.....

An informative article -

What does Gluten free mean?

Why eat Gluten free food?

Which foods are gluten free?



