As this newsletter reaches you, it may already be 2019! Reflecting on the many changes this past year, I am especially grateful for your commitment to Gundersen. You make such a difference for our patients, families and staff!

As shared in our last newsletter, some of the changes in 2018 included wonderful new staff members: Sheila Erickson, Gundersen Partners office assistant, and Donna Niedfeldt, Volunteer Services program coordinator. They have been a great addition to our team! It was the completion of Mary Jo Klos’ tenure as Partners President. The presidency transitioned to Linda Gillette as of Jan. 1, 2019. We are deeply grateful to Mary Jo and look forward to Linda’s guidance of the Partners organization. I also want to thank our out-going board members, Sally Miner and Debbie Veglahn, for their commitment to Gundersen Partners.

One of my favorite quotes by Leo Buscaglia is, “Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” This is what you do each time you volunteer!

My thanks,
Lori

Employee Assistance Program

Gundersen Health System’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides volunteers with free confidential assessment, short-term counseling, and referral services. This service is intended to assist volunteers who, voluntarily, seek assistance to resolve personal problems that may be affecting their health, well-being, and/or volunteer performance.

Quality of Service: All EAP consultants possess an appropriate level of education, training and experience necessary to provide high quality EAP assessment and referral services to you.

Fees: Sessions with a consultant are offered at no direct cost to you. If you choose to accept a referral to another individual or agency, any financial charges will be your responsibility. Many services are available on an ability-to-pay basis or may be covered by your health insurance. While the EAP consultant will offer some assistance, it is your responsibility to determine whether or not referred additional services are covered under your insurance plan.

Confidentiality: The EAP is strictly confidential. No information will be released to any other person outside the EAP. Should you wish for your consultant to speak to any other individual, you will need to sign a written consent form for them to do so. Federal and state laws and regulations protect the confidentiality of your
Employee Assistance Program - continued

participation in this program. Federal and/or state regulations do not, however, protect the disclosure of information related to suspected child abuse and neglect, a situation deemed potentially life threatening to self or others, or commission of a crime against property or person.

Office Hours: EAP is available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Evening appointments are also available. During regular business hours, the EAP office assistant can assist you with the scheduling of an appointment or in leaving a message for your consultant. After hours, on weekends or on holidays, EAP clients can call the EAP office at (608) 775-4780 or (800) 327-9991 and talk directly with the EAP back-up consultants. Should you need to see a consultant in person, you will be assisted in making those arrangements.

Hands on Health Day
By Nathan Burns, Teen/High School Volunteer

A few weeks ago, I attended Hands on Health Day through Scenic Rivers AHEC (Area Hospital Education Centers). I arrived at the hospital early in the morning and met in the main lobby, where there were about 15 other volunteers. First, we were split into small groups based on the field we selected for our job shadow (which constituted the first half of our day). For the second half of the day, the volunteers were split into four small groups for simulations in the ICE (Integrated Center for Education) house.

For my job shadowing field, I chose medical imaging. I had the opportunity to speak with both physicians and imaging technicians. During this shadow, I was able to see how physicians and technicians interacted with patients, performed scans and interpreted the various images. If I ever had a question relating to what I was seeing, the people I was shadowing were more than willing to answer it. In addition to this, there was plenty of downtime in which there were no patients. During these times, I was able to get a sense of the profession in general and see if it was something I could see myself doing in the future. This job shadow was very entertaining and informational.

After the job shadows, we went to the ICE house and split into small groups. There were four different stations with different coordinators, and each one was very fun. In the four stations, we learned about the more tangible aspects of medicine and had opportunities to do hands-on surgical simulations. We had the opportunity to perform a fake surgery using cameras and medical tools; learn about the heart and listen to the various heart sounds; learn about ultrasound and practice using an ultrasound machine to find objects in a plastic block; and learn how to safely administer vaccines using a medical “Manikin.”

When we finished our simulations, we grouped up again to eat lunch and listen to a quick presentation about public health. We also had the opportunity to speak with and thank the staff members that we had worked with over the course of the day. With the job shadows first and the simulations at the end, we finished the day before noon.

Overall, I really enjoyed this Hands on Health Day experience. I really believe it was a helpful program, and I have absolutely no regrets about doing it - in fact, I would have regretted not doing it. Having participated in this program, I was able to be linked with professionals in healthcare and gain valuable insight that I would not have otherwise been able to obtain. Also, I was able to perform mock surgeries, which I thought were really entertaining. Participating in Hands on Health Day allowed me to broaden my horizons in the medical field, ultimately allowing me to make educated decisions on what I want to do in the future.
During the month of November, we celebrated milestones of those volunteers who have been volunteering for 25+ years. There are some impressive numbers! Tracey Kagel has volunteered for 32 years and is currently helping Carrie Baumgartner in Neurology and in Social Services. Spiritual Care had four volunteers recognized: Evelyn Hammes, 25 years; Betty Roskos, 25 years; George Smith, 28 years; and Marita Smith 36 years of service. Lois Betz, 25 years, and Swani Lubeck, 30 years, are long-term volunteers in the Gift Shop. Gretchen Burns has volunteered 49 years and is currently assisting in the Cancer Center and Oncology Clinic. Betty Klum has volunteered 30 years and Al Lien, 27 years; both are presently Volunteer Transport Services volunteers. Altogether, our volunteers have donated an amazing 287 years of service! Below you will find photos of our volunteers with either their peers or supervisors. If you see any of our good deed doers, please congratulate them on their long-term commitment.

Tracey Kagel (center) has volunteered for 32 years. Pictured with Tracey are (left to right) Carrie Baumgartner, Psychotherapist, and Julie Holzworth, retired adult disabilities coordinator.

Al Lien has volunteered for 27 years. Pictured with his fellow volunteers from Volunteer Transport Services, left to right, are Kathy von Groven, Betty Ehrams, Al, Kim Schneider, Deb Talle and Dick Wieser.

Betty Klum has volunteered 30 years. Pictured with Betty are part of the Volunteer Transport Services Wednesday afternoon crew (left to right): Tom Perry, Bob Thompson, Judy Stemper and Barb Perry.

Spiritual Care had four Eucharistic Minister volunteers who were honored at their get together. Pictured left to right are Sr. Marcia Baumert with volunteers Betty Roskos (25 years), George Smith (28 years) and Marita Smith (36 years), and Evelyn Hammes (25 years).

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Celebrating 25+ years-of-service milestones - continued

Gretchen Burns has volunteered 49 years and is currently at the Cancer Center.

Gift Shop volunteers Lois Betz (35 years) and Swanhild Lubeck (30 years).

Lois and Swani at our 2018 Volunteer Recognition and Appreciation event

25+ YEARS
Congratulations!

Sympathies to
Linda Arentz on the death of her father
Maddie Carroll on the death of her grandfather
Robert Ekern on the death of his mother
Geri Guy, on the death of her mother
Maribeth Phillips on the death of her brother
Marilyn Schreiner on the death of her mother
Rachel and Bob Thompson on the death of their sister-in-law
A little help can go a long way

During difficult times, we often find there are issues for which we would like support and advisement. Great Rivers 2-1-1 can help with questions like these:

“I just lost my job and am under so much stress. Where can I get some help?”

“My husband and I need to see a counselor.”

“Are there programs for housing or rent assistance?”

“Where can I get help with managing my budget?”

“I am struggling with an addiction.”

Contact Great Rivers 2-1-1 – a free, confidential referral and crisis line. With just one call, you will speak with a caring specialist who will listen and talk about your needs, offer emotional support, and provide information and referral to community agencies and programs. Great Rivers 2-1-1 is a service of Gundersen established over 40 years ago to assist clinic and hospital patients and their family members who have a need for community-based services.

About Great Rivers 2-1-1

In 2017, Great Rivers 2-1-1 received 22,416 phone calls. “What Great Rivers 2-1-1 can provide is a compassionate way for people of all ages to find out about essential services that can positively impact their lives,” says Mary Mundt Reckase, director of Great Rivers 2-1-1. “We help individuals locate job training, food pantries, counseling services, in-home services, temporary financial assistance, alcohol and other drug programs, and parenting support resources.” The largest category of calls is related to mental health and addictions. Nationally, 2-1-1 services are available to 300 million Americans – more than 95 percent of the population. In 2017, 13.4 million calls were placed to 2-1-1s across the United States.

Great Rivers 2-1-1: Find the help you need, in the way that is most comfortable for you

Call 2-1-1
24 hours a day; 365 days a year
(Language translation available)

Text your ZIP code to 898211
Monday-Friday afternoons and evenings

Chat www.greatrivers211.org
Monday-Friday 8 am – 4 pm

Online www.greatrivers211.org
Anytime to search the 2-1-1 resource database
Hello to all of you,

My name is Linda Gillette, and I am both excited and nervous to be the president of Gundersen Partners for 2019 and 2020. I am excited because Gundersen Partners is such a vibrant organization that does so much for the patients and families of Gundersen and the wider community. I am nervous because I hope that I can successfully follow in the shoes of Mary Jo Klos and be a good leader for the partners organization. With the help of a phenomenal board, I feel that we will be able to continue to make a difference in the lives of patients, families and the local population.

Gundersen Partners has as its two major endeavors service and fundraising. The shining star of both of these efforts is our beautiful gift shop. Under the leadership of Eileen Wiltlinger, the gift shop continues to flourish and raise money with the help of all of the dedicated volunteers and the gift shop assistant. But almost more important than the financial benefit the gift shop provides, it is the service to the patients and families that is invaluable. The gift shop serves as an oasis and a getaway for many who are experiencing difficult times in their lives. I have seen first-hand as I have worked in the gift shop someone walk in with sadness in their eyes and leave with a little smile on their face after they have found a treasure for a patient, family or themselves.

As we begin 2019, there are several fundraisers that will help us in our efforts to provide financial service to others. But even more important is the fun and camaraderie that these events provide. The carnation sale on Valentine’s Day in both LaCrosse and Onalaska can get you your Valentine’s Day gift easily and at a low price. The profits from this special event provide scholarships to our great teen volunteers who are invaluable to the Partners organization. The people who work this sale get to see the joy on the faces of those that get to share their love with others on Valentine’s Day with the simple gift of a carnation.

March 4-6 in the Legacy Lower Level in LaCrosse and March 7-8 in the Onalaska Ed Center is the famous $6 sale. At this sale, you can find neat jewelry, clothing, scarves, phone accessories and so much more.

Gundersen Partners president Mary Jo Klos represented Gundersen Partners during an honor awards presentation at the recent Partners of WHA State Conference in Stevens Point, Wis.

Make some time to stop in and you will find yourself browsing for longer than you think. It is so much fun to see employees, volunteers and others take a little break from their busy days and shop the $6 sale.

If you have never been to a D & D Candy Sale, you are really missing a tasty experience. We even provide samples. Our first candy sale for 2019 will be held in March in the Legacy Lower Level. Some of the candy is homemade at the D & D wholesale shop. The homemade turtles and fudge are so good. The customers and the workers have fun looking at all of the amazing offerings of candy.

My first goal for 2019 and 2020 is to continue to support one of the major initiatives that Mary Jo Klos began to emphasize in her term. Care for the Caregiver is so important to many of us every day. Whether it is family members or friends, we all need help with knowing the right way to care for others who need our help. We also need to provide care while making sure that we don’t hurt ourselves in the process. Gundersen Partners wants to support existing services that deal with Care for the Caregiver and provide new opportunities when we encounter them.

The second goal is to support efforts to improve community health. Gundersen Partners seeks to assist Gundersen Health System in this endeavor. We would love to financially and physically be involved with efforts to help our community be healthier. We are planning to hold a day-long seminar during my tenure that will address both Care for the Caregiver and community health, as well as have sessions that address community health, as well as have sessions that address community

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needs and resources for caring for others and for ourselves.

In order to support these goals, Partners needs to work with other partner organizations in the district and the state. Several Gundersen Partners attended both the State and Western District meetings of WHA this fall. It is invaluable to learn what other groups are doing to help patients, families and the community. Advocacy Day at Madison will be held in March, and it is a great way for us to meet with our legislators and tell them what we want and need to see from them. Any of our members are welcome to attend and experience Advocacy Day.

I want to thank all of you who are members of Gundersen Partners. Although our normal membership meeting is in December, we would like to have an additional membership gathering in May. We are planning a tour of the new Gundersen Hotel and Suites followed by a meet and greet gathering with light refreshments and appetizers. Look for more information in the next newsletter. Please let me know if there is any way that I can be of more help to you in the next two years. If you have ideas of what we can do to further assist patients, families and the community, please let me know. We are always looking for ways to involve membership in any way that we can to help support our mission of service to others.

Joining Mary Jo Klos at the Partners of WHA State Conference was Sheila Erickson (Partners office assistant), Linda Gillette (Partners president-elect), and (not pictured) Lori Van Lin (director of Volunteer Services). This year’s conference celebrated “Volunteers – Our Every Day Heroes.”

Gift Shop News
By Eileen Wiltinger, supervisor

Happy New Year from the gift shop! We had another busy year in 2018. The $36,000 in profits generated in the gift shop allowed Gundersen Partners, the Health System Auxiliary, to assist many patients, patient families as well as the community. They were also able to award $10,000 in scholarships to children of employees here at Gundersen Health System. I want to thank all the volunteers who have supported the gift shop. When you make a gift purchase in the hospital gift shop, it is truly a gift that gives twice.

We celebrated throughout the year as well. In April we celebrated all Gundersen volunteers with our Volunteer Recognition luncheon held at the ICE House. In November we celebrated two long time volunteers in the gift shop. Lois Betz has been a volunteer for over 35 years. She can remember at least five different gift shops over the years. She also remembers when the gift shop used to sell cigarettes. Today, she comes about once a month on Thursdays from 5-7 p.m. with another volunteer with 30 years of volunteering experience, Swanhild Lubeck. Swani, as she is affectionately referred to, has been a steady staple in the gift shop. Swani enjoys visiting with the countless employees and patient families she has served over the years.

Gundersen Partners Office has moved. It is currently located on the right, immediately inside the double doors when entering the Volunteer Services Department on 4West, Heritage Building, La Crosse Campus. Sheila Erickson’s (office assistant) phone number and mailstop remain the same.
Calendar of Events

**January**
1 Happy New Year - Volunteer Services closed
3 Partners board meeting

**February**
7 Partners board meeting
14 Annual Valentine’s Day Carnation Sale, La Crosse and Onalaska Campuses
   *Proceeds benefit the Teen/High School Merit Program*
18 Blood drive, Lower Level Legacy, 12 - 5 p.m.
19 Blood drive, Lower Level Legacy, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
20 Blood drive, Lower Level Legacy, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.
27-28 Blood drive, Onalaska Campus
   *Please call (877) 232-4376 to schedule an appointment to donate blood.*

**March**
4-6 $6 Sale, Legacy Building, Lower Level
7 Partners board meeting
7-8 $6 Sale, Onalaska Education Center, Lower Level
10 Daylight Savings Time begins
12-13 Simply Sweet Candy Sale, Legacy Building, Lower Level
14 Simply Sweet Candy Sale, Onalaska Education Center, Lower Level

**Save the Date:**
**2019 Volunteer Recognition and Appreciation Event**
**Thursday, April 10**

**Next Blood Drive:**
**April 22, 23 and 24**
Please call (877) 232-4376 to schedule an appointment to donate blood.

Contributors to Volunteer News
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Volunteer Services
(608) 775-6755

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(608) 775-3602

Volunteer Services Mission Statement
The Volunteer Services Department provides meaningful experiences for our volunteers – elevating services and programs for our patients and families and the community we serve.