In May, as we prepared this newsletter issue, it was shared that Gundersen Health System and Marshfield Clinic Health System are in discussions about a possible merger into a larger, integrated regional health system. This process may take several months, as there are many things to consider when discussing a possible merger. Key questions guiding conversation include:

- Are our mission and values aligned?
- How do our organizational cultures fit?
- Are we positively impacting patient care and experience?
- Does a possible merger strongly position us for the future?

Following is information about Marshfield and why we are considering them for a possible merger – Marshfield is an integrated, regional healthcare system headquartered in Marshfield, Wis., with 61 clinics and six hospitals serving central and northern Wisconsin and Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The system has more than 11,000 employees, including more than 1,200 clinicians with 86 specialties, a health plan, and research and education programs. Their mission is: “Enrich lives to create healthy communities through accessible, affordable and compassionate care.” You can read more at marshfieldclinic.org.

Like Gundersen, Marshfield is a non-profit, physician-led, and clinically-driven regional healthcare system with a long history and commitment to a patient-focused culture. Our organizations are similar in focus on high-quality care, outstanding patient experience, innovative population health initiatives, and enriching lives. We believe we can be stronger together and collectively enhance the level of care across Wisconsin, in northeast Iowa and in southeastern Minnesota. Please see the map below listing Gundersen and Marshfield service areas.

**INTEGRATED REGIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM LOCATIONS**
From the director - continued

Additionally, both Quartz Health Solutions, Inc. (co-owned by Gundersen Health System, UW Health and UnityPoint Health) and Security Health Plan (part of Marshfield’s primary operation) are strong, key components of an aligned model of care. We believe provider-sponsored health plans allow us to provide high-quality care and help us achieve our strategic plan Triple Aim. As possible merger conversations continue, the health plans will provide the benefits and services their members expect.

As a volunteer you may be asked by family, neighbors and friends about this. Let them know that while Gundersen and Marshfield are discussing a possible merger, the high-quality care we provide and the great experience patients expect from us will not change – nor will our need for your involvement as a volunteer and our gratitude for your help. A possible merger would allow us to bring the best pieces of both organizations together to care for patients, their families and our communities. We will continue to keep you informed as we are able. Thank you for being ambassadors of Gundersen in sharing this information.

My thanks,
Lori

Teen Corner
By Karol Fox, program coordinator

As I’m writing this, it is close to the end of May, and the students who are seniors have their graduation parties planned and are completing their final chapter of their high school. To me it feels like just a few months ago I was interviewing them for a volunteer role. This group of young people have been outstanding; they are responsible, dedicated and volunteer for the right reason – to help others. They understand their role and have invited their peers to volunteer as well. I will miss them, and I hope as they move on with their lives, they remember volunteering with pride and continue to give back wherever they land.

This summer will bring many new faces joining our volunteer crew. Their excitement and enthusiasm is contagious. For many, this is their first experience of independence outside of school or a club organization, and volunteering can be intimidating at first. One important piece of information shared with the newbies are the three R’s when delivering items to hospitalized patients: Right Room, Right Delivery, Right Patient is vitally important and ensures correctness.

In closing, please know how appreciated each of you are. Your presence and generosity is never taken for granted. Thank you for sharing your time and talents that enrich the lives of our patients, families, visitors and one another.

Take care,
Karol Fox
Volunteer News

Volunteer Transport Services (VTS)

Each month, Jane Rada – one of our many dedicated volunteers – totals our Volunteer Transport Services patient and non-patient transports numbers. The wheelchair transports are for discharged patients from the Medical Center or outpatients for clinic appointments and can include family members and visitors. Examples of our non-patient transports include: patient belongings from Pre-op (Legacy Level 2) to the patient’s room after surgery, specimens from various clinical buildings, Gift Shop deliveries, witnessing of Advanced Care Planning documents, and more.

In the first quarter of 2019 (January, February and March), there were 2,716 patient transports and 1,597 non-patient transports. January had 1,504 transports, February had 1,282, and March had 1,527. These numbers consistently show the value and importance of our VTS crew!

Campus Corner
By Donna Niedfeldt, program coordinator

While several students have moved on and we wish them all the best, by the time you receive this newsletter we will have onboarded 20 new college volunteers, bringing our total to 151! That is 10 more students than we had registered at the end of 2018, and that is after graduation and during the summer. Your willingness to serve, especially given the demands on your time, is inspiring!

We continually look for ways to enhance service to our patients and each other in the organization. We added the East Building Pharmacy Delivery assignment to our program in February. We now have students transporting chemotherapy medications from the Pharmacy to Infusion Services in the Cancer Center. When you are out and about and see opportunity, please do not hesitate to share your ideas with us.

Happy summer, and congratulations to all our graduates!

Donna Niedfeldt
Hello everyone,

April, May and June were certainly filled with activity for Gundersen Partners. We had a very successful PRN Footwear sale on April 4. PRN will host another sale at the end of October, so please add that to your calendar. The footwear sale was followed closely by our second annual Pawsitively for Patients bake sale on April 11. Our baked goods were sold out in four hours! The biscuit jar raffle to guess the number of dog biscuits actually had two winners who guessed the same number closest to the correct count. Everyone had a great time for such a worthy cause.

On April 17 some of us headed to Madison for WHA Advocacy Day. It was a successful day with a wonderful address by former governor Tommy Thompson on the future of healthcare in the U.S. There was also a legislative panel discussion by Wisconsin legislators that addressed many of the issues related to healthcare in Wisconsin. Governor Tony Evers gave a short address at lunch and we visited with representatives Jennifer Shilling and Steve Doyle in the afternoon. On April 24 we headed to Adams-Friendship for the Partners of WHA western district spring meeting. Sherry Jelic, CHE Chair, Partners of WHA, gave a wonderful presentation titled “Not all Wounds are Visible- Journey for Mental Health.” Mental health concerns are some of the major issues that the Wisconsin Hospital Association is addressing this year.

The 32nd annual Gundersen Partners and Franciscan Healthcare Auxiliary Annual Joint Luncheon was held on April 30 at the Cargill Room. We had over 150 attendees and the style show was fabulous. Kay Mazza from Dales Clothing and Kimberly Bentzen-Tabbert from Mainstream Boutique were the style show moderators who gave us some great fashion tips. The models did a splendid job and we all had a fun time. We also collected donations of food and money for the Salvation Army. We hope you and your friends will plan on attending the 33rd Joint Luncheon in 2020.

Partners hosted a spring members’ social on May 21 at the Gundersen Hotel and Suites. Everyone who came had continued on page 5
From the president – continued

a personal tour of the hotel by the hotel manager and fellow Partners member, Gretchen Henchen. Refreshments and afternoon treats were enjoyed. This event was an opportunity for our members who cannot attend the December annual meeting. If anyone has ideas for next year’s social, please let me know.

**GUNDERSEN HOTEL & SUITES**

Partners will be hosting another great $6 merchandise sale on June 10-12 in the Legacy Lower Level Lobby and June 13-14 in the Onalaska Education Center. There is always something for everyone at the $6 sale! Steppin’ Out in Pink will be held on Saturday, September 7. The Gundersen Partners team, Partners in Pink, will be walking in the event. If you would like to join our team or make a donation, please contact Sheila in the Partners office.

Partners is again awarding scholarships to the children of Gundersen employees who are pursuing a healthcare career. Gundersen Partners is proud to help students as they work to become healthcare professionals. Scholarship winners will be announced in a future newsletter.

I would like to thank all of you who supported our activities and events in the last three months. What we do matters for our patients, families, members and our community. Please let us know if there are ideas that you have that would further our goals. Have a great summer.

Linda Gillette

---

Left to right are Linda Gillette, Sheila Erickson and Linda Arentz at the western district meeting.
Gundersen Partners board members Linda Gillette, Linda Arentz, Mary Jo Klos and Lori Van Lin joined nearly 1,000 volunteers, employees and trustees for the Wisconsin Hospital Association’s (WHA) Advocacy Day in Madison on April 17. Members of Gundersen’s External Affairs department, including Brian Vamstad (also a Gundersen Partners board member) and Elizabeth Rogers, and Chris Stauffer from Corporate Communications also attended. This annual event brings hospital advocates together to learn about key health care issues facing Wisconsin and provides an opportunity to meet with lawmakers to discuss how their policy decisions impact communities across the state.

Former four-term Wisconsin governor and U.S. Health and Human Services secretary Tommy Thompson started out the day with a discussion about healthcare policy’s progress and new challenges with Eric Borgerding, WHA president and CEO. This was followed by a bipartisan state legislative panel including:

• Rep. Evan Goyke (D-Milwaukee)
• Sen. LaTonya Johnson (D-Milwaukee)
• Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green)
• Rep. John Nygren (R-Marinette)

Governor Tony Evers provided the luncheon keynote address, focusing his remarks on the current state biennial budget process. Evers noted that he has heard from healthcare advocates across the state who are adamant that he delivers on his promises to invest in healthcare, which Evers believes is important to foster economic growth and stability in the state. Evers said his proposed budget is structured to improve access to medical care across the state.

In the afternoon, about 500 attendees met with elected officials in the state capitol. They urged legislators to fund increases in Medicaid reimbursement – which lags significantly behind the cost of caring for some of Wisconsin’s most vulnerable citizens – as well as treat telehealth the same as other Medicaid services to expand access to healthcare and keep up with the pace of technology. Our group met with Senator Jennifer Shilling and a staff member on behalf of Representative Jill Billings.

Wisconsin is known for its high-quality, affordable and accessible health care, and it is important to educate policymakers about issues that directly impact our health system, patients and communities. Involvement from our Partners volunteers is important and impactful. If you are interested in learning more about Advocacy Day or attending next year’s event, please contact the Partners office or Lori Van Lin for additional information.
Partners News

Where are they now?
By Marilyn McElligott, Partners historian

As one of their many scholarship programs, Gundersen Partners has been awarding scholarships to children of employees for 15 years. Each quarter, recipients of the scholarship will be highlighted to remind members of the importance of supporting healthcare education.

Molly Kachel graduated from Minnesota State University – Mankato in 2015 with her Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN). She graduated summa cum laude and number one in her class. Molly spent two years working in the VIP Suites step down unit at St. Mary’s Hospital in Rochester, Minn. For the past two years, she has been working as a cardiac critical care nurse at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, Ill. She has been awarded the nursing Daisy Award and functions as a charge nurse.

Comments from Molly: “This scholarship really helped me to advance my education towards the career that I now love and cherish. My patients mean the world to me, and I have the privilege of helping people each and every day.”

Gift Shop News
By Eileen Wiltinger, supervisor

Greetings from the Gift Shop. We have had a late start to spring, but the gift shop is full of garden flags and stakes as well as garden memorials. The gift shop is a great place to shop for a special gift for a loved one or yourself. As a volunteer at Gundersen Health System, you are always entitled to a 10 percent discount. Did you know that if you volunteer in the shop, you get a 20 percent discount? The Gift Shop is currently looking for outgoing, friendly people who like to work with the public. The Gift Shop is open seven days a week and has a variety of opportunities for you or someone you know to share their talents. Please contact me, Eileen Wiltinger, for details. My phone number is (608) 775-3477 and my email is emwiltin@gundersenhealth.org. All the profits raised in the Gift Shop go towards patient and patient family programs, student scholarships, and community programs.
# Calendar of Events

## July
- **4** Independence Day, Volunteer Services closed
- **10-11** Blood drive, Onalaska Clinic
- **15-17** Blood drive, La Crosse Campus

## August
- **1** Partners board meeting

## September
- **2** Labor Day, Volunteer Services closed
- **5** Partners board meeting
- **18-19** Blood drive, Onalaska Campus
- **23-25** Blood drive, La Crosse Campus

**The next blood drive** at the La Crosse Campus will be November 25-27 and in Onalaska on December 18 and 19.

**NOTE:** We will not be mailing future issues of our Volunteer newsletter. If you wish to receive a copy, please provide the Volunteer office with your email address.

**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.

---

**Contributors to Volunteer News**
- Karol Fox
- Linda Gillette
- Marilyn McElligott
- Donna Niedfeldt
- Lori Van Lin
- Eileen Wiltinger

**Volunteer Services**
(608) 775-6755

**Partners**
(608) 775-3602