From the director, Lori Van Lin

Throughout the year we are so grateful for all you do for the patients, families, and staff at Gundersen and in our communities. During April—National Volunteer Month—we have the opportunity to highlight your many contributions and especially share our thanks! This year’s Volunteer Recognition Event will be held on Tuesday, April 23, and will again be at the Gundersen ICE House (Integrated Center for Education) in La Crosse. This celebration in your honor will include a meal, a photo booth for fun pictures with your co-volunteers, and surprise entertainment! Volunteers achieving service hour milestones will receive hour-level pins/bars.

We hope you will be able to join us. Please watch for your personal invitation (also included will be the yearly milestone award recipient’s names) and be sure to RSVP.

Each of you makes a difference in the lives of others every time you volunteer. Thank you for choosing Gundersen to do this!

My thanks, Lori

In this edition of our newsletter, we felt it would be interesting to share statistics on our Volunteer Escort Services site from 2010-2016. The grid on page 2 has been divided by patient transports and other transports. The numbers are very impressive and we thank this crew for their dedication and commitment to our patients, families and visitors.

In every community, there is work to be done.

In every nation, there are wounds to heal.

In every heart, there is the power to do it.

— Marianne Williamson - A return to Love
Volunteer News

Escort Services, Level 3, Heritage Building

Top 10 Escort Runs for 2016:
1. Hospital discharges for Legacy
2. Clinic
3. Patient belongings
4. Hospital discharges from Heritage
5. Oral Surgery Clinic
6. Charts, etc.
7. Orthopedics
8. Gastroenterology
9. Blue envelopes
10. Cardio Testing/Cardiac Rehab

The information below is from the volunteers at the Clinic Information Desk from a five month period in 2016. Again, their commitment to helping others is remarkable. Thank you to all of our outstanding volunteers who consistently go above and beyond daily:

• People helped with questions — 394
• Escort family/visitors — 238
• Attending the coffee station — 105
• Other duties, such as wheelchair retrieval — 140

Thanking our Veterans

Robert (Bob) Borchardt, Escort Services volunteer, served in the Naval Reserves and attended Marquette University in Milwaukee from 1949 to 1954. He volunteered for active duty from 1954 to 1955. He was enlisted at the time the Navy laid the keel for USS Nautilus, the first nuclear-powered submarine.

Interesting story: Bob once received an “Out-of-Bounds” weekend pass while in Key West. He left on a Friday for New York, then on to Milwaukee the next day where he got married, and he returned to Florida on Sunday.

Ron Johnson, Escort Services volunteer, served his country from August 1949-December 1952 in Fort Bragg, N.C. Ron was a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne. Ron didn’t have any outstanding memories, but Adele, his wife, does: She went into labor with their first born son. Adele says “It took the nervous taxi driver 30 minutes to get to the base hospital, which was 15 miles from our home, and hospitals were way different back then.”

Don Peterson, Clinic Transport volunteer, SP3, was in the U.S. Army as company clerk from December 1954-November 1956. He was stationed in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; Camp McCoy, Wis.; and Fort Polk, La.

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Volunteer News

Thanking our Veterans - continued

Kathie Von Groven, Escort Services volunteer, joined the Army Reserves when she was 41. Shortly thereafter she was activated and served in Germany in support of Desert Storm from January-May 1991. Kathy shared one story “On one A.T. in Germany, we went to Prague for the weekend and were in a rollover and almost ended up in a Czechoslovakian jail, due to a language miscommunications. We were in trouble with the Army when we couldn’t make it in Monday morning. All five of us were okay and the crystal vases I bought didn’t break.”

Jim Nesbitt, Hospice volunteer. “In November 1966, I was a college student at Wisconsin State University-La Crosse. I found out that my college deferments had run out and that I had been drafted in the U.S. Army. Not wanting to end up in a jungle, I enlisted in the U.S. Navy, and was ordered to report to the Chicago recruitment station. On Feb. 21, 1967, I was inducted.

“I was then sent to Great Lakes Naval Station in Waukegan, Ill. Luckily for me because of my college time, I was instantly promoted to E-3. I spent 12 weeks there in "boot camp" learning the intricacies of being a sailor. Because of my college experience, I asked to go to Language School, in Monterey, Calif. Of course, being the military way, I was sent to Aviation Electronics School, in Memphis, Tenn. (At that time, what I knew about electronics was that you hit a switch on the wall, and light came on!)

“I spent a year there in the electrician/electronics school. I then received orders to go to an aviation attack squadron (VA-43) in Virginia Beach, Va. It was a training squadron for pilots in the fleet, who would come there to be recertified in electronics training. My plane in this squadron was the A-4 Skyhawk. I was stationed there for the rest of my naval career, working on aircraft electronics systems in navigation, radar, radio, and weapons systems. During this time, I advanced to Petty Officer, 5th class (E-5) I was discharged into the Naval Reserve for a two-year obligation in November, 1970. I have always been very grateful to the Navy for my military service. I learned a tremendous amount, I received personal life discipline, I learned how to be adaptable and positive in any situation, and I also understood that what freedoms we have must be earned.”

Larry Indahl, Escort Services volunteer, served from 1969-1972, basic training in Arlington, Va. He was stationed for 1.5 years in Ethiopia in the Accounting/Finance office. Larry was part of the ASA, Army Security Agency, when discharged held the rank of Specialist 4.

**Any veterans who may have been missed in this edition of our newsletter, please let us know and we can feature your information in our July/August/September edition.
Three generations of volunteering

Karen Vogt started volunteering at Gundersen Health System in January 2010 after her sister's passing, as a thank you for the excellent care she received. Karen recruited her daughter Gretchen Henchen to join her. Gretchen is now an employee in the Service Excellence department. Gretchen's daughter Emily Henchen began volunteering in June 2016; this is the true meaning of three generational volunteering. Karen was a Jefferson Award recipient in 2015. Below is a copy of a phone conversation from Service Excellence who received a call from a patient's sister:

The patient's sister called Service Excellence today because she wanted to let Gundersen know what a great person they have at the service desk in the Clinic in La Crosse. The patient's sister said that her brother is in the hospital at this time, so she has been coming to Gundersen to visit with him and see how he is doing. She wanted Gundersen to know what a great person they have in Karen Vogt, a volunteer at the Hospital. The woman said that after spending time with her brother, she knew she should go home so that he could rest.

When she left the clinic, she was having a difficult time finding her car. She finally when back in and decided to ask for help from Security or anyone who could help here. She explained to Security what had happened as they were walking toward the door. As she was walking by the Information Desk with someone from Security, Karen, one of the volunteers' who works at the Clinic Information Desk, overheard what Cecilia's concern was as they walked by the desk.

Karen walked up to the woman and told her that she knew where her car was as her car was parked in the same area. They went out and found the woman's car, and everything was good. She was so very happy to find her car, and she wanted to be certain that Gundersen knows what great volunteers work for them to help patient's get where they need to go - and are always ready to assist patient's when they need it.

OMS Teddy Bear Drive Benefits PNICU Sibling Activity Kits

On Dec. 22, Chloe Bruland and her dad, Mark, and Meghan Cota and her mom, Patty, delivered 166 teddy bears to Gundersen Health System. The teddy bears were part of the OMSLife Foundation collection. Since 2013 Chloe and Mark have set up containers throughout the coulee region to collect teddy bears to bring understanding to OMS (Opsoclonus Myoclonus Syndrome). In 2015, Meghan and her mom joined Chloe and Mark, now the collection containers range from Onalaska to Viroqua. When all the bears are collected, they are each tagged with the OMSLife Foundation business card. The bears will then become part of the PNICU...
Volunteer News

OMS Teddy Bear Drive Benefits PNICU Sibling Activity Kits - continued

Sibling Activity Kits here at Gundersen. The kits are used as a diversion for siblings so parents can spend time with their newborn. Other times, the kits are sent home with the parents for the siblings as a "gift from their new baby". The kits contain age appropriate items such as coloring books, crayons, stickers and the teddy bear. In 2016, 175 PNICU Sibling Activity Kits were distributed to families.

Visit the OMSLife Foundation website at omslifefoundation.org. You will be amazed at these young people and their family's devotion. We extend our gratitude to Chloe, Mark, Meghan and Patty for sharing the bears with Gundersen Health System.

Why I volunteer

By Tessa Thurin, Teen/High School Volunteer

Why did you start volunteering here? That's a question I'm eager to know the answer to every time I volunteer at Gundersen Health System. Most of the time, the answers are quite similar like "because I want to go into the medical field" or perhaps "because I really love the feeling of helping others." For me, it's a little bit of both.

I knew my way around the hospital fairly well before I even started volunteering there, at least the route to the Pediatric Endocrinology unit. I was diagnosed with type one diabetes almost six years ago in this very hospital. Type one diabetes is when the body's pancreatic cells are destroyed, so the pancreas can no longer produce the insulin needed to turn carbohydrates into energy. Since my pancreas no longer makes its own insulin, I have to either take insulin shots before every meal and when my blood sugar needs to be adjusted or use an insulin pump which connects inside of me and feeds me insulin when needed.

This disease is most commonly passed down through genes, which explains how I contracted it, through my type one diabetic father.

So, I did what I do with everything in life and took a positive outlook on life. On my first anniversary of having type one diabetes, I turned to my mom and told her I wanted to do something for it. She didn't quite understand what I meant by this. I was not talking about going out for a celebratory dinner. I turned to her and said "I want to do something to make a difference." We came up with the only event we could coordinate in a day to prepare: a bake sale and lemonade stand at the end of my rural road. I never expected to raise over $200 for Juvenile Diabetes Research, especially with the location I chose. This was only the start to my crazy ambitions with JDRF.

(Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation)

Throughout the years of my involvement, I have raised over $20,000 towards funding research for a cure.

This year, I was selected as the 2016-2017 La Crosse Youth Ambassador for JDRF, which means I represent the....

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Sympathy to:

Ken Isler, on the death of his daughter

Family and friends of Willard Tronick

Judy Stemper on the death of her brother-in-law

Carol Bluske, on the death of her husband, Wes (who was also a volunteer)

Warren Bartsch, on the death of his brother-in-law

Family and friends of Richard (Dick) Eirschele
Why I volunteer - continued

La Crosse area by being a spokesmodel for juvenile diabetes and appearing at local JDRF fundraising events such as the JDRF Walk held in October each year at Myrick Park and the JDRF Gala in January. I was featured on the local WXOW News 19 station to bring awareness of the JDRF Gala, and illustrating what it’s like to live with type one diabetes in general.

So, when someone asks me why I volunteer at Gundersen, my answer is “Not only do I love making other people happy because it brightens my life; I also know the feeling of spending time in a hospital. For the times that I’ve been sick in the hospital, I would have loved to see the kindness and generosity of complete strangers.”

Teen Corner

By Karol Fox, coordinator

Thank you to all our volunteers for their dedication to volunteering. Each day there are numerous volunteers going about their business here at Gundersen Health System, not looking for accolades but here to assist our patients and families. Whether it’s physically transporting outpatients, delivering items to our patients, samples to the appropriate labs, assembling patient education materials or doing behind the scenes work, each of you enhance the lives of our patients. We would not be the caring organization we are without your extra touches that you so readily give. Thank you not only during National Volunteer week, but for each day you take time and schedule yourself to volunteer.

Teen/high school volunteers have been busy these past few months. Currently they serve in a variety of departments, most recently they were recruited for the Pre-Op, Level 2 of Legacy Building where they are assisting with discharging patients by wheelchair after school. Imaging is another site, where the volunteers assist staff with rooming patients, tidying up exam rooms and visiting with patients while they wait for the exam and there are also odds and ends that they can help with as time allows. Weekdays, Mail and Flower delivery site has volunteer coverage. The Gift Shop is another place where the students donate their time, helping with sales, learning the importance of being there for others and dedication. All of our sites are fortunate to have the dedicated young people willing to go above and beyond to help others.

On April 2, Gundersen is a co-sponsor of the Family Fun Fest at the OmniCenter in Onalaska. The teen/high school volunteers will be busy distributing educational materials and playing bean bag toss with the kids. The students were initially asked by Kris Edwards, Pediatric manager, to help with these types of community events as part of the anti-bullying campaign.

One of the perks of becoming a teen/high school volunteer is the opportunity to attend our annual Hands on Health (HOH) Day. The HOH event is designed by Scenic Rivers AHEC and Sheila Chapel, ICE House (Integrated Center for Education) manager. The students will participate in a job shadow; spend time using their skills in the simulations lab at the ICE House, followed by evaluations and lunch. This year the HOH will be held on Friday, April 7. Other events for students at Gundersen are Pathway to Health Care Careers, Wednesday, April 5, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the ICE House, open to all high school students; and Adventures in Healthcare for eighth-grade students, at the Aimee Mathy Boys and Girls Club on Friday, April 21 (this event is coordinated through Gundersen Volunteer Services, Scenic Rivers AHEC and La Crosse school district).

To all Happy Volunteer Week – we truly appreciate each of you!
Did you know in 2016?

— The Chart Collation/Patient Education volunteers assembled over 60,000 patient education folders and chart packets for the various nursing units including the regional sites. These dedicated ladies pay close attention to details so the most current/updated forms are in the folders and packets for the patients. The team of chart collators volunteer approximately 23 hours per week.

— Ron and Kathy Christensen folded over 60,000 towels for the anesthesia department.

— Volunteers donate a total of 36 hours to each of the three day blood drives at Gundersen in La Crosse. Thank you to Joanne Allemand, Dave Drewes, Charlotte Swenson, Judy Staats, Dar Dwyer, Susan Austin and Sarah Nohr our loyal blood drive volunteers!

— The Valentine’s Day Carnation Sale was Feb. 14, and many thanks to our volunteers who graciously came in on “sweetheart’s day” to sell, deliver and process over 1,600 carnations at main campus, Onalaska Clinic and Services Support Building (SSB). Approximately 58 hours of service was donated by our volunteers for this one day sale, earning more than $1,600. The proceeds will be used for our outstanding students in our teen volunteer program for their post-secondary education. Volunteers also helped with bouquets for employees from outside vendors, over 65 arrangements were delivered on Valentine’s Day.

— Volunteers labeled over 4,750 Making Choices books with the updated contact information. This was extremely important saving measure by not having to reprint the books but also taking care of our environment (reducing waste).
Partners News

From Partners president: Mary Jo Klos

**Gundersen Partners 2017 student scholarships; your gifts keep giving**

*Applications for Partners’ scholarship program are now online*

Gundersen Partners, the Health System Auxiliary, has applications available for its annual scholarship program. Each year, Partners awards approximately $10,000 in scholarships. Partners has presented nearly $140,000 to students pursuing healthcare careers—made possible in large part by your purchases at the Gundersen Gift Shop.

“Awarding these scholarships is very important to members of the Partners organization,” says new president Mary Jo Klos. “This tangible support for future healthcare professionals is a wonderful way for our group to contribute to these very deserving individuals today and to build a legacy for future generations.”

**Applications for the scholarship program are available:**

- On gundersenhealth.org/partners. Scroll down to the “Scholarships” section. The Requirements Form, application form and checklist can be found online
- In the Volunteer Services/Partners office, Level 3 of the Heritage Building, or by calling the Partners office at ext. 53602.

Scholarship applications must be received by 4:30 p.m. Friday, June 16. Applications must be complete at the time of submission, or they will not be accepted. Applicants will be notified of selection in August.

For more information about Gundersen Partners, visit gundersenhealth.org/partners or call ext. 53602. Send applications to:

**Gundersen Partners Scholarship Chair**
Mailstop: H03-004
1900 South Ave.
La Crosse, Wis., 54601

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**Gift Shop News: Eileen Wiltinger, Gift Shop coordinator**

As the last of the snow begins to melt and there are signs of spring everywhere. It’s a wonderful time to reflect on the beautiful things that happen in the gift shop every day. I have the most wonderful volunteers who truly enjoy the time they give to the shop. Their dedication to every customer that enters the front doors is measured by the many compliments they receive on a daily basis.

The customers themselves are just as kind and compassionate. In the past year we have had several customers who were in the shop “just looking around”, make a purchase of flowers for a patient in the hospital. They wanted the bouquet to go to an individual that maybe didn’t have any visitors or just needed a pick me up. The customers wanted no recognition they just wanted to make someone’s day. How wonderful is that!

On the weekends the patient families and hospital staff are always so appreciative of the volunteers. In the past year we have been able to have more stable weekend hours due in part to the teen volunteers that donate their time at Gundersen. Teen volunteers play a big role in the Gift Shop. Their willingness to give up a Saturday or Sunday speaks volumes about the wonderful young adults and care givers they will become.

The Gift Shop is always looking for kind and compassionate individuals looking to make a difference in someone’s life. If you are interested or you know of someone who is interested in volunteering in the gift shop please give me a call or stop in. Retail experience is not necessary.

**Gundersen giftshop**
Partners News

Partners Bookworm Invitation

**Attention bookworms!**
Gundersen Partners, the Health System Auxiliary, is once again sponsoring its own book club. “The Bookworms” formed several years ago but now is trying something new: They will meet once a month over the noon hour on Gundersen’s La Crosse Campus.

“Gundersen Partners encourage you to discuss a good read with us!” says Vicky Jessen, Volunteer Services.

If you need more information, please call Vicky, Partners office at (608)775-3602. Or email vajessen@gundersenhealth.org.

“Let us know of your preference to meet on Tuesdays or Wednesdays so that we can choose the day with the most interest. The meetings will be once a month and participants will need to supply their own food.” Vicky says.

Welcome New Partners Member – **Gloria Kubiak**

Where are they now?

*By Marilyn McElligott, Partners historian*

In each newsletter, we will highlight a student scholarship recipient in a column titled “Where are they now?”

**Name:** Ryan Schmocker  
**Parent’s name:** Jean Willer (mother) - Social worker at Hospice

**Schools:** University of Wisconsin, BS, molecular biology, 2007; Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, MD, 2011; University of Wisconsin, MS, population health sciences, 2015;  
**Where he is now:** General surgery resident (PGY6), University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, currently applying for Complex Surgical Oncology Fellowships.

Diversional Activity Kit supplies are needed

Gundersen Partners is accepting **new, sealed** Uno cards and new decks of playing cards and new markers for the Diversional Activity Kits. These kits are provided by Partners for hospitalized patient’s use. They offer patients activities that offer distraction from the discomforts of hospitalization.

These kits increase the therapeutic engagement between staff and patient through a joint activity (e.g. playing a card game and increase patient/family satisfaction as care activities are individualized to meet patient needs. These items decrease restlessness, confusion, and/or agitation by allowing the patient activities that are perceived as “fun” (e.g. card games)."

Please contact Vicky in the Partners Office at (608)775-3602 for drop off information.
Calendar of Events

April
2  Family Fun Expo at the Onalaska Omni Center, co-sponsored by Gundersen Health System
5  Pathway to Health Care Careers at the ICE House. Open to all high school students, 5:30-7:30 p.m. No registration required.
5  Partners/Mayo Franciscan Healthcare Auxiliary 30th annual Joint Luncheon, 11 a.m., Radisson Ballroom. Tickets are $23 and available at Festival Foods and both Hospitals’ gift shops.
7  Hands on Health Day for Teen/High School volunteers, registration required.
14 Good Friday
16 Happy Easter
17-19 Blood Drives at the La Crosse Campus

Did you know: For more than 65 years, the BloodCenter of Wisconsin has partnered with donors to meet the needs of people in our local communities? BloodCenter is the only supplier of blood products to more than 50 Wisconsin community hospitals. To set up your appointment to donate, please call (877) 232-4376.

25  Gundersen Annual Volunteer Recognition Event at the ICE House. Invitations will be mailed.

May
14 Mother’s Day
29 Memorial Day (Volunteer Services closed)

June
5, 6, 7 HCI $6 and up sale, Lower Level Legacy
8-9 HCI $6 and up sale, Onalaska SSB 1035B Planning Center
15 Blood Drive at the Onalaska Clinic
18 Father’s Day
27-28 Simply Sweet Candy Sale provided by D&D Candy Outlets, Lower Level Legacy
29 Simply Sweet Candy Sale provided by D&D Candy Outlets, Onalaska SSB 1035B Planning Center

Simply Sweet Candy treats from around the world provided by D&D Candy Outlets, proceeds benefit Partners.

Upcoming Blood Drives at the
La Crosse campus: July 17, 18 and 19
Upcoming Blood Drives at the
Onalaska campus: Aug. 10

Contributors to Volunteer News
Lori Van Lin
Karol Fox
Mary Jo Klos
Marilyn McElligott
Tessa Thurin
Eileen Wiltinger

Volunteer Services
(608) 775-6755
Partners
(608) 775-3602

19 Advocacy Day
20 Blood Drive at the Onalaska Clinic
21 Adventures in Health Care Careers at Aimee Mathy Center, Boys and Girls Club. Registration is required.

10 • gundersenhealth.org/partners