From the director, Lori Van Lin

Gundersen Health System Volunteer Services marks its 50th anniversary this year! This is half a century of service to patients, families, and our communities. This tradition and ongoing commitment to serving others fits so perfectly with Gundersen’s 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. At the core of this plan is the directive to “Enrich Every Life.” What better way to accomplish this than through volunteer service. What you do goes beyond helping others – you play a vital role in increasing capacity and resources within our health system. Your volunteer engagement impacts the experiences and outcomes of our patients and families. Thank you for living our mission every time you volunteer!

Volunteer Services marks 50 years

By Marilyn McElligott

This fall, Volunteer Services will mark 50 years. The Lutheran Hospital Auxiliary, now Gundersen Partners, was founded in 1950 requested by administration, to establish a department to oversee volunteers and to hire a full time employee. This was done in 1927. To date five people have served as director: Alice Goldbeck, 1967-December 1973; Cathy Inderberg, 1974-July 14, 1975; Marilyn McElligott, July 15, 1975-June 30, 1998; Sarah Havens (interim), July 1, 1998-September, 2000; and Lori Van Lin, October 2000 to present.

The director of Volunteer Services role is to recruit and maintain a competent, satisfied volunteer corps that will support the medical center’s mission of care for patients, families and community, through assigned service. The director is responsible for development of policies, procedures, assignment descriptions, recruitment, interviews, orientation, placement, training, evaluation, retention, recognition and with medical center staff, initiation of new programs. Two employees assist the director in program management, Karol Fox and Ellen Kolb.

There currently are 982 volunteers, ranging in age from 14 to 90. The department meets all standards set by the Joint Commission on Hospital Accreditation. Volunteer Services is most grateful to the medical center staff who supervises volunteers assigned to their areas, and show appreciation for their service, a key factor in satisfaction and retention.

Volunteer Services is closely linked to Gundersen Partners, the Health System Auxiliary—but the two are separate entities. Partners is granted permission to serve by the Gundersen Health System Board of Trustees, is a 501(C) organization and is guided by its Articles of Incorporation.

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Volunteer Services marks 50 years – continued

Partners embraces the mission of Volunteer Services and all volunteers are responsible to the Volunteer Services director. The organization also raises funds to benefit the medical center, patients, families and community. The prime source of funds is the Gift Shop, owned and operated by Partners and overseen by their salaried manager.

The Volunteer Services director and Partners’ president report organizationally to an Administrative Team Director. The Volunteer Services director serves as a resource and liaison to Partners and attends meetings of the board and membership.

Volunteer survey results

By Alec Gorski, volunteer

As a requirement to graduate from West Salem High School, all seniors must complete a Senior Exit Project (SEP). This project includes a paper, a project and a presentation. The project is designed to push students to learn vital life skills, as they will be on their own in the coming year.

For the project, we are required to choose a mentor who is trained in the field of the project. Within this project, students are asked to meet two of the four criteria of: Academic, Career, Community Service or Personal Growth. Within these requirements, we are allowed to choose the type of project they desire. For my project, I decided to run an anonymous survey on the effects that volunteering has on the volunteers here at Gundersen. With the help of my mentor, Karol Fox, I was able to distribute these surveys to volunteers at the La Crosse, Onalaska and Prairie du Chien locations of Gundersen Health System.

I surveyed the volunteers on things such as; why they volunteer, how they feel after volunteering and if they had seen any changes in their health from the beginning of their time as a volunteer. After countless hours of analyzing the surveys and reading each individual volunteer responses, I was able to write a final report to wrap up my project. With this report, I presented my finding and knowledge to the Volunteer Advisory Committee here at Gundersen. Based on the common trends I identified through the survey, I had the ability to recommend things to the committee that could be tweaked to enhance the volunteer experience here at Gundersen.

This project has been a success for me, and it could not have been possible without the help of my mentor, Karol Fox, as well as all the volunteers at Gundersen who took the time to fill out my survey.

Thank you

Highlights from Alec’s survey

• Ninety-nine percent of the volunteers have formed new relationships through their volunteering.

• Asked “What Is One Thing in Your Volunteer Experience You Have Learned?” Volunteers said they learned to communicate with a variety people, and that not everyone is “living in luxury;” a smile can go a long way; and the importance of helping those in need.

• Alec’s favorite comment: “Some days I make a difference in a life, others I make a bigger difference in my own life, it gives meaning and purpose.”

Alec’s complete survey results will be posted in the marlin boards outside the Volunteer office on July 1.
Gundersen student volunteer lends a hand in Nicaragua

By Taylor Tomczyk, college volunteer

In January, I and more than 60 La Crosse area healthcare students participated in a two-week journey to Nicaragua through an organization called Vida Volunteers. Vida’s Medical Program is designed to help impoverished communities in Central America, while giving volunteers around the world an interactive, cultural, engaging experience that will help them become better professionals and life-long volunteers. Volunteers provide free medical, dental, and veterinary care to rural communities in Central America, where most individuals bring home as little as $2 a day.

Our large group divided up to form two teams to serve 1,000 patients throughout communities surrounding the cities of Masaya, Granada, and Diriamba. We experienced six clinic days as part of the medical team, interviewed patients, and presented differential diagnoses to Vida doctors. The doctors then decided if our diagnosis was correct, taught us about the patient’s condition, and directed us on recommendations and medication instructions to reiterate to the patients.

The best experience I had with a patient this year was meeting a 105-year-old man who was completely healthy and still working as a farmer to provide for his family. He and his wife had been married for about 65 years, and together they had 10 children. He attributed his health to God, because he prayed every day for God to keep him healthy for as long as he needed him here on this earth. It was amazing to meet such a humble man who had unashamedly committed his life to God.

Along the way, our group enjoyed a few recreational days, allowing us to experience the Nicaraguan environment and culture. We went zip-lining through the canopy, explored the historic city of Granada, bartered in the Masaya market, and enjoyed a day at the Apoyo Lagoon (a body of water created by a volcano). I will never forget the children’s smiling faces as we played soccer, colored, and picked out stickers with them. Also, the reassured looks on parents’ faces as we treated and educated their families was an amazing experience that made me excited to enter into medical school this August.

Note: Taylor is a senior at University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, majoring in biomedical science. She has volunteered at Gundersen Health System for over two years, serving in Pediatrics and Escort Services. She was the recipient of the 2016 A.C.V. Elston III, MD Summer Research Fellowship.
ICE-In Case of Emergency

During Hurricane Katrina, so many people were injured, unconscious and separated from their families that emergency workers came up with the idea of putting an ICE – In Case Of Emergency – contact in their cell phones. If you’re involved in an emergency and can’t communicate, paramedics and other emergency professionals may go to your cell phone to look for an ICE contact. To start with you should designate one to three people as your ICE contacts by going to the address book of your phone and inserting ICE in front of your contacts’ name. You could also make new entries and save as ICE 1, ICE 2 and ICE 3 or specify numbers as ICE Mom, ICE sister etc. It’s also a good idea to have your ICE contacts at home on your refrigerator or just inside your front door. ICE lets your phone do the talking for you in an emergency.

Hospice training | Summer has arrived

Gundersen Health System Hospice Volunteer training will be offered this summer. If you are interested in learning more about this, please contact Lori Van Lin at (608) 775-3697 or lavanlin@gundersenhealth.org.

Summer has arrived. Travel Wisconsin’s 2017 Spring/Summer Events Guide can help plan your next adventure. This month to month guide details over 500 Wisconsin events from April 1 thru Sept. 30. This guide includes fairs, festivals, bike races, rodeos, museum exhibits, performing arts and more!

Military Service

Roger D. Johnson, escort volunteer: Joined the Army in 1958 for a six month active and six year deployment with the Army National Guard. Roger had basic training in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. and stationed in Fort Eustis Army Base near New Port News, Va. He was a cook on a salvage ship for six months that traveled from Virginia to Maine monthly to bring back dry docked ships. He trained at the National Guard Armory one weekend a month and two weeks a year at Fort McCoy, Wis. He retired in 1965 as an E6.

Harlan Perry, escort volunteer: Joined the Army while in college in 1957 and was stationed at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri in the artillery unit. He was recalled in 1961 back to the Army during the Berlin Crisis to Fort Sill, Okla., and was discharged two years later.

Interesting fact, Harlan chose not to pursue becoming an officer, however his son outranks him as a sergeant, now he salutes his son!
Gundersen’s culture of safety: Using wheelchairs is important to each of us

By Edie Kubicek, RN, CSPHA, safe patient movement educator

New in 2017 volunteers who provide patient transports are receiving basic wheelchair safety training by a core team of trained volunteers. We extend our thanks to these training volunteers: Warren Bartash, Jim Howe, Gary Frahm, Jane Rada, Marilyn Schreiner, Darla Serverton, Linda Stark, Judy Stemper, Bob Thompson and Karen Vogt. In addition to receiving the training, these volunteers provided input and valuable hints they use in transporting patients, such as greeting your patient, introducing yourself and confirming the destination.

Please remember these important tips when operating wheelchairs:

- Always enter an elevator backwards with our patient facing forward.
- Utilize over-head corridor mirrors for routes of travel and safety.
- Wear good footwear when volunteering and transporting.
- Wipe chair down after a transport with approved wipes.
- Oversized individuals who need transport assist must be moved by qualified staff members (employees only) using Safe Patient Movement equipment such as WC Mover or Bariatric portable chair to transport patient.
- Know your own limitations and use good judgment when transporting.

We strive to keep all our patients safe when helping transport patients and we want to keep volunteers safe as well. The Wheelchair Operation Training Checklist is available in the Volunteer office.

Sympathy to:

- Linda Arentz on the death of her aunt.
- Ellen Bluske on the death of her brother.
- Family and friends of Gladys Brown, volunteer.
- Family and friends of Sue Eber, volunteer.
- Family and friends of Don Hutzenbuehler, volunteer.
- Family and friends of Norby Miller, volunteer.
- Arla Redman on the death of her son.
- Family and friends of Bev Robinson, volunteer.
- Tim Tritch on the death of his mother-in-law.
Greetings from the gift shop, the major fundraiser for Partner’s, the hospital auxiliary. A statement that is used often when a purchase is made in the Gift Shop is your gift purchase gives twice. This is so true. Last year the gift shop gave $25,000 to support Partner’s programs and the goal this year is to raise $30,000. The funds raised fund scholarships for employees’ children, Restless Dolls for Restless Souls—the purchase of baby dolls for patients needing comfort, and diversional activity kits for young family members.

Did you know the Gift Shop helps the health system in other ways as well? The shop works with Occupational Therapy by providing patients who are recovering a place to practice their “real world” skills before they are released from the hospital. They come in and ask questions, select items to purchase and pay for merchandise. The Gift Shop also inflates approximately 200 balloons in the fall for Steppin’ Out In Pink. The Gift Shop is also a relaxing place to visit for family members who are at the hospital with friends and family members going through difficult times.

Your support of the Gift Shop is greatly appreciated. If you or someone you know is looking to volunteer somewhere you can make a difference please consider the Gift Shop. You can volunteer as little as one day a month or more if you have the time to give. Whether you’re shopping or volunteering in the gift shop you are making a difference in someone’s life.

Where are they now?

By Marilyn McElligott, Partners historian

Mary Dregne, daughter of Mark and Ruth Dregne (Mark works in the Blood Bank MT, ASCP, ABB, Medical Scientist and Ruth works in the Dept. of Nursing as a nurse educator) graduated from Winona State University with her BSN in Nursing in 2011.

Mary worked at Gundersen Health System as a new nurse on the Surgical Digestive Unit, followed by the Float Pool and also the Outpatient Surgery area for the first four years of receiving her nursing degree. She also was an adjunct nursing instructor for Winona State for a clinical group for one semester before going to Hawaii for a nursing position in Manoa Senior Care. She worked in Hawaii for one year before returning to the Midwest and obtaining a job at Regions Medical Center in St. Paul, Minn., as a nurse in the burn unit. She is currently working at Regions Medical Center and will soon be transferring to the Post Op Care Unit.

Andrea Guggenbuehl, daughter of Dave Guggenbuehl. Scholarship recipient in 2005

Obtained undergraduate degree from University of St. Thomas.

Obtained Doctorate degree in Physical Therapy from St. Catherine’s University.

Works as a regional director for Aegis Therapies in Minneapolis.

She is very thankful to be a past scholarship winner!

Gift Shop News

By Eileen Wiltinger, Gift Shop coordinator

Greetings from the gift shop, the major fundraiser for Partner’s, the hospital auxiliary. A statement that is used often when a purchase is made in the Gift Shop is your gift purchase gives twice. This is so true. Last year the gift shop gave $25,000 to support Partner’s programs and the goal this year is to raise $30,000. The funds raised fund scholarships for employees’ children, Restless Dolls for Restless Souls—the purchase of baby dolls for patients needing comfort, and diversional activity kits for young family members.
Welcome all bookworms

Gundersen Partners book club meets on the third Tuesday of each month over the noon hour (12-1 p.m.) on Gundersen’s La Crosse Campus. July 18th we will meet in the La Crosse Clinic conference room 1005, near the Clinic Lobby. For more information, call the Partners office (608-775-3602) or email us at vajessen@gundersenhealth.org. Participants are welcome to bring their lunch. Hope to see you there!

Memorial gift to Partners in memory of Joyce Glynn from Joanne Kehr

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 patients’ use. They offer patients activities that provide 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).” Contact Vicky in the Partners office at (608) 775-3602 for drop off information. Thank you

Steppin’ Out In Pink

In the past Gundersen Partners has supported Steppin’ Out In Pink, a walk with proceeds helping fund the Gundersen Medical Foundation’s breast cancer research initiatives and supporting local breast cancer patients and survivors. This year is the 12th annual walk, to be held on Saturday, Sept. 9. New this year is the option to walk the traditional 4.5 mile course or a shorter 2.5 mile route. Please know if you do not wish to walk at all you can still participate in spirit just by registering.

Please contact the Partners office by July 10 at vajessen@gundersenhealth.org or call (608) 775-3602 if you are interested in participating as a Partners member so we know if there is enough interest to pursue.

The registration fee is $15 before June 30, $20 July 1-Sept. 4 and $25 from Sept. 5-9. Check out the website at steppinoutinpink.org for more information.
## Calendar of Events

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<td>4</td>
<td>Independence Day, Volunteer Services closed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Blood Drive at the Onalaska Campus</td>
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<td>Blood Drive at the La Crosse Campus, Legacy Building, Lower Level</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Partners Bridge Club Luncheon, Radisson Hotel</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Blood Drive at the La Crosse Campus, Legacy Building, Lower Level</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Volunteer Mandatory Education 1-4 p.m., Rasmus Center, Heritage Building, Level 1</td>
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### Next Blood Drives at the La Crosse Campus:

Dec. 18, 19 and 20 and at the Onalaska Campus on Oct. 5 and Dec. 14. To donate blood you must be in good health, weigh at least 110 pounds, present a photo identification which includes your date of birth, and be at least 17 years old (16 with parental consent). Bring a photo ID, please. Lunch is provided.

### Contributors to Volunteer News

Lori Van Lin  
Karol Fox  
Marilyn McElligott  
Eileen Wiltinger  
Taylor Tomczyk  
Edie Kubicek

### Volunteer Services

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