



HEARTLINE

RMC AUXILIARY NEWSLETTER • JUNE 2020

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Who would have ever thought we would be in this situation? So many plans have been put on hold or not being held at all. It is affecting all of us in many different ways. But hopefully, we all remain healthy and safe.

We have not held an April or May Auxiliary Board meeting. At this point, we have decided not to hold our regular June Luncheon at the hospital, as the hospital remains closed for these functions. Ordinarily we would have installed our new Officers of Secretary and Treasurer. Thank you to Bobbie Pollesch and Ann McDonald for volunteering to continue as treasurer and secretary during this unusual situation.

Unfortunately, our District meeting and the WHA Advocacy Meeting were both cancelled due to COVID 19.

Our Spring Flower sale was held and was very successful. Thank you to everyone that worked at it and supported it. There will be no Brat Sales at Webster's and no Mum Sale held this year due to COVID 19.

The Auxiliary would like to welcome our new Volunteer Coordinator Julia Treichel (although we have not been able to formally meet her), we are looking forward to it. We would also like to thank Betty Waller for helping us through the transition of Kim Bresser leaving and Julia joining us. There have been many changes occurring lately.

I hope this Newsletter finds all of you doing fine. The Board wanted to keep in touch with all of you in some way. Agnesian could not publish and print our usual newsletter due to staff furloughs, so we are using a different format for now. I hope that this newsletter helps to keep you informed. We will try to continue to keep you posted on any activities as they might occur. Please feel free to check with any of us if you have questions regarding the Auxiliary and our activities.

Please stay healthy, take care and be safe.

Julie Stellmacher, President

RMC Auxiliary Luncheon/Meeting for June - UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME



Recent Donation to RMC

Besides staying home and doing our part to slow COVID-19, the Auxiliary stepped up to help with some needs at RMC. The Auxiliary donated \$8,000 for the purchase of a basic transport ventilator which will allow Emergency Department staff to immediately place intubated patients on this ventilator so EMS can transport patients to St. Agnes without having to disconnect and switch machines. Currently, a COVID patient would be connected to a large ventilator, then disconnected (open the circuit) and reconnected to the very small and portable EMS ventilator for transport to St. Agnes. When dealing with a COVID patient,

Emergency Department personnel do not want to “open the circuit” any more than absolutely necessary, as it sends the patient’s breath into the room air and increases the risk of transmission to the care team. In addition, the Auxiliary donated \$1,400 to purchase two portable O2 saturation monitors used to evaluate the oxygen level of COVID patients being treated in the Emergency Department overflow area. Knowing a patient’s O2 saturation is critical in determining their course of care and how intensive of care is necessary. Currently, there is one machine available for this area and is not sufficient for the surge of patients expected. The additional two O2 saturation monitors will allow them to monitor the levels on three patients at once.

This equipment will continue to be highly utilized and valuable after the COVID crisis. Jennifer Bunker, Director of Inpatient, Emergency and Surgical Services, said that this donation “will allow us to provide the most efficient and highest quality care to our patients with suspected COVID. It will also help us to best meet the assessment and interventional needs of these patients in a surge”.

So, while we are staying home feeling useless, we must remember the hard work of fundraising and running a successful Gift Shop that enabled us to provide the funds needed for this equipment at this critical time.

God bless you all!



TREASURER’S REPORT

Financial Report April 30, 2020

The period of January 1 to April 30, 2020 was an interesting time for the Auxiliary, as it was for everyone. “Treats for Sweets” raised \$390 and Candy Bar Sale brought in \$400. We also raised \$120 with a Nutman sale in January. We are waiting to receive our share of the Collective Goods Sale held on Feb. 19. Most of the money collected for the Flower Basket Sale was deposited in May, but we did receive \$340 from credit card charges before the Gift Shop closed.

The Gift Shop was closed on March 15 due to COVID-19. Year to date sales through March 15 were \$26,558, so it looks like Gift Shop sales may fall almost 25% below our budget for this fiscal year. Fortunately, we do not have the overhead that other retail businesses do, so we can afford to wait it out and hope that “normalcy” will be restored soon.

RMC Auxiliary, Inc.			
Treasurer's Report			
Four Months and Ten Months Ended April 30, 2020			
	Jan - Apr	Year to Date	Annual
	Actual	Actual	Budget
INCOME			
Fundraising	\$ 1,250	\$ 17,106	\$ 19,445
Donations	74	207	-
Membership Dues	20	630	750
Gift Shop Sales	7,302	26,558	34,848
Total Income	\$ 8,647	\$ 44,501	\$ 55,043
EXPENSES			
Fundraising Expenses	\$ -	\$ 4,425	\$ 5,735
Luncheons	(4)	(96)	(22)
State Conventions/District Meetings	-	537	1,140
Organization Expenses	76	235	269
Gift Shop Expenses	8,577	23,484	25,360
Total Expenses	\$ 8,650	\$ 28,586	\$ 32,482
Net Income Before Distributions	\$ (3)	\$ 15,915	\$ 22,561
DISTRIBUTIONS			
Scholarships	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,000
Donations for RMC	16,356	30,080	19,255
Total Distributions	\$ 16,356	\$ 30,080	\$ 22,255
NET INCOME AFTER DISTRIBUTIONS	\$ (16,359)	\$ (14,165)	\$ 306
CASH BALANCES		\$ 8,917	

During this period, we donated \$384 to RMC for a remote control for the front door and restocked the patient hospitality cart for \$22. We also donated \$6,539 for a recumbent stepper with a bariatric seat for the Wellness Center. In response to a need at RMC due to COVID-19, we donated \$8,000 for a portable ventilator and \$1,400 for two O2 sat monitors.

We had \$8,917 in cash at the end of April. So, we have the funds for the three \$1,000 scholarships that we will award this summer, as well as working capital that may be needed to reopen the Gift Shop.

Bobbie Pollesch, Treasurer

PROGRAMS UPDATE

As I write this article on May 13, the Ripon Medical Center along with other SSM Agnesian facilities are not allowing groups in their buildings. Therefore, we do not know if the June auxiliary luncheon will happen as planned on June 22, be cancelled or rescheduled for another summer date. Our featured guests at the June luncheon would have been our scholarship winners. We are pleased to announce that the RMC Auxiliary scholarships were awarded to Theodore Rauch from Ripon High School and Nicole Walker and Nadolie Stoll from Markesan High School.



If you have any suggestions about future programs, please contact me at 920-539-2150 or kanddshady@gmail.com.

I hope all of you remain healthy and happy.

Diane Shady, Chairperson, Programs

VOLUNTEER NEWS AND NOTES

At this time volunteer services is technically 'closed'. Volunteer Services Staff are now in charge of screening people before entering the hospital. We do all scheduling, training, and supplying for this new essential role within the hospitals. We have been directed that all work related to volunteer services must come to a complete halt until further notice. We apologize.

Julia Treichel, Coordinator, RMC Volunteer Services

MEMBERSHIP

Just a reminder that your 2020-2021 dues need to be paid by June 25. Please make your check payable to RMC Auxiliary for \$10.00 and send it to:

Donna Schulz
N7297 County Rd FF
Ripon, WI 54971

I will then get your money to our treasurer. Thank you so much and stay healthy.

Donna Schulz, Chairperson, Membership



COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION

The opioid epidemic was already a national crisis. Covid-19 could be making things worse.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the nation was in the throes of another public health crisis: the opioid epidemic.

More than 2 million Americans struggle with opioid use disorder, and about 130 Americans on average die every day from an opioid overdose. Opioids account for a majority of drug overdose deaths, the leading cause of accidental death in the US. It's a crisis that's been a priority for officials at the federal, state and local levels for years.

Now, the coronavirus has disrupted all matters of life across the country -- including efforts to combat the nation's opioid problem. Walk-in clinics and syringe exchange programs have been closed. Community support groups are meeting virtually. Some who struggle with substance abuse are homeless or incarcerated and cannot comply with social distancing guidelines, while those who can are left isolated and at risk. On top of all that, the pandemic is causing massive stress -- a primary driver of relapse.

"This changing, very strange world that we're living through could serve as a trigger for people to return to drug use," said Daliah Heller, director of drug use initiatives at the public health organization Vital Strategies. "And that brings a great potential for overdose with it. "As local officials report spikes in overdose calls and deaths, experts and advocates say they're concerned the coronavirus pandemic is making an already serious problem worse.



County coroners, law enforcement and emergency responders around the country are reporting spikes in overdose calls and deaths -- and they are concerned that is connected to Covid-19.

It is too soon to determine whether such reports are evidence of a larger trend, said Nora Volkow, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Federal and state data on fatal and non-fatal overdoses for the past few months are not yet available, while coroners and medical examiners are overwhelmed with cases of Covid-19 and may not have the resources to follow up on overdose deaths, she said. "We do not know," Volkow said, of whether more people are overdosing in connection with Covid-19. "In many cases, we will likely never know." But she predicts that some communities will "absolutely" see an uptick in overdoses.

There are a few reasons that experts are concerned about a potential coronavirus-related increase in opioid overdoses. For one, harm reduction programs across the country have been experiencing reduced capacity given the pandemic, Heller said. Though many states have defined such services as essential in their stay-at-home orders, some programs have had to restrict access or reduce staffing because of a lack of funding or personal protective equipment for their workers. Federal agencies have eased some regulations that have mitigated the risks of overdoses and Covid-19 infection, Heller said. For example, patients receiving medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorder often have to visit a provider daily for a dose of methadone. But because such visits could expose both patients and health care workers to Covid-19, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is temporarily allowing treatment programs to provide patients with two to four weeks' worth of methadone doses to take home.

Meanwhile, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has also relaxed telehealth restrictions around prescriptions for buprenorphine, another medication-assisted treatment. Still, for people who lack health insurance or high-speed internet access, there are barriers. In some communities, services that treat addiction or prevent overdoses, such as needle exchange programs, are on hold -- leading people to engage in risky behaviors. More harm reduction programs around the country are beginning to mail syringes and

naloxone to people who use opioids, Favaro added. County health departments are ramping up naloxone distribution to protect against overdoses too. But the coronavirus pandemic presents challenges there as well.

When someone overdoses on opioids, another person generally administers naloxone to reverse those effects. Because of social distancing, Volkow said, it is possible that some individuals may not have anyone else around to administer the life-saving medication.

Another reason people are at heightened risk of opioid overdoses has to do with how Covid-19 has affected the nation's illicit drug supply, experts say. Illegal drugs are typically smuggled into the US from other countries, but border restrictions brought on by the pandemic could theoretically decrease drug access in some areas, Volkow said. On the surface, Heller said, that might seem like a good thing. But a limited supply could drive dealers to increase the potency of products to meet demand, mixing powerful, synthetic opioids like fentanyl into drugs and putting those who use them at a greater risk of overdose. Less access to drugs could also drive users to seek out other, unfamiliar drug sources -- or risk withdrawal. It will be a while before we know the true effects that Covid-19 has had on those who struggle with opioid use disorders, Volkow said. But already, there are many reasons to worry.

Complete article by Harmeet Kaur, CNN can be found at: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/07/health/opioid-epidemic-covid19-pandemic-trnd/index.html>

Barb Benkoski, Chairperson, Community Health Education

PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION UPDATE

Just want to tell everyone from their PPE Chair, be safe stay, healthy and you don't have to drop all the things you need, to be safe doing during this pandemic.

Sandy Krueger, Chairperson Public Policy, Education

GIFT SHOP

We closed our doors to the Gift Shop March 15th, leaving within it so many wonderful gifts and yard ornaments! Hopefully, we will see you there soon as the "new normal" allows reopening!

Mary Schieffer, Chairperson, Gift Shop

FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITES

CANDY BAR SALES

Candy bar sale is on hold until we can enter the Gift Shop. If anyone has money to turn in please mail it to Bobbie Pollesch or contact Georgia. The last order of candy bars is still being calculated. Money for 54 of 72 totes(boxes) has been confirmed. Profit to this point \$ 864.00. Thank you to all who placed totes(boxes) in business or bought for gifts.



BRAT FRY FUND-RAISER - All brat fries have been cancelled for this year.

MUM SALE - The Mum sale for September has been cancelled. The grower decided not to grow plants this year due to the COVID 19 Safer at Home Order.

FLOWER BASKET SALE



The flower basket sale was very successful. Profit \$1,369.50. An increase of \$372.25 from last year. Total sold was 175 baskets. Thank you to all who sold baskets. Barb Behlen was our top sales lady with 41 baskets.

Thank you to Radene Abel for her time to make the sale successful and to Bloch's for the beautiful flower baskets and pick up arrangements to help keep us safe. Also, thanks to SSM for printing the order forms. Pat Albright and Barb Miller had a fun day helping Radene on the May 1 distribution day. Thank you, ladies.

Georgia Stellmacher, Chairperson, Fundraising

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Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well. ~Voltaire