



Association of Volunteers
1000 Mineral Point Ave.
Janesville, WI 53548

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Helping Hands

A newsletter for the Mercyhealth Association of Volunteers

Fall 2018



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From our manager

Welcome Fall 2018!



Fall can be a time for all of us to reflect and to reminisce on past memories. I can relate on both a personal and professional level. Many of you are aware of my mom’s passing this last spring. As I took the time one afternoon to read the handwritten notes I received from my mom over the years, I felt great comfort and I was able to reflect and indulge in my feelings and thoughts to reminisce on wonderful past experiences. In one of her notes, she encouraged me to stop and smell the roses. This immediately reminded me of a moment in time when my daughter called and asked me to come over to her house and take a walk with my grandchildren. As I started to say I was too busy with all of the household chores my husband and I were currently doing, I remembered my mom’s advice and was out the door immediately and indeed, enjoyed smelling the roses, as I now have an unforgettable memory with my family.

I experienced this same phenomenon here at Mercyhealth about a month ago. As I came in to work over the weekend to clean some old files, I reminisced over old pictures and articles I found of past volunteers and felt grateful for the past events and memories we have all shared through our time with Volunteer Services. Specifically, I thought back to one of the last days I spent with Marie Bilek before she retired after dedicating 40 years to Mercyhealth. As Marie was pulling out old files, past memories started to flow and seeing the way she laughed and cried simultaneously, reminded me that Mercyhealth is more than just a career. It has become my home, giving me memories with all of you for which I could not be more grateful.

As I grow older, I think back to how I reminded my children to always look forward and never backward. However, these recent epiphanies have taught me the value in taking a step back to reflect on those fond memories that have made us who we are today. This brings me to the purpose of this letter: I encourage you all to take time this fall to reminisce on your time and dedication to volunteering at Mercyhealth. Stop and smell the roses, remember why Mercyhealth is home to you, and place value in the moments that have brought you to where you are today. I applaud all of you for taking the time to reminiscence on the impact that you personally have had on Mercyhealth.

In this newsletter, you will find a story of Karleen Wojczak, one of our teen volunteers from a few years ago. This is a beautiful, heart-touching story to further our reminiscing on the value Mercyhealth has brought to all of our lives. Enjoy the story.

With all that said, I am thrilled to tell you about what Volunteer Services has in store this fall! We have a few events coming your way that can aid in your reminiscing. First is the Fall Luncheon, which will be held at the Janesville Country Club on Thursday, November 15. Our guest speaker, Virginia E. Leffler, has written two books, *Reflections from a Warming House Window*, focused on reflections about Janesville’s Traxler Park ice rink, and *Tis Fine Land, That*, a memoir about Riverside Golf Course. For this luncheon, there will be a fall style show and all of you will be the models! (Look for more details on your luncheon invite you will receive in the mail). We ask that all of you wear an outfit from Castaways Thrift Shop. Start shopping now at Castaways for a beautiful new outfit you can wear to the luncheon so we all will be styling and reminiscing together. Another upcoming event is the annual Holiday Market that will be held Sunday - Tuesday, November 4 - 6. The theme this year is an old-fashioned Christmas down on the farm! I’m looking forward to seeing you all at our events this fall!



Newsletter writers needed

Do you think of yourself as a good writer? Do you just enjoy reading, or do you also enjoy writing articles? Do you love volunteering? If you answered yes, please call **Jill Ayres** at **(608) 756-6713**, or **Jackie Lee** at **(608) 756-6739**. We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help with future newsletters.

Volunteers needed:

Volunteers are needed in many areas of our hospitals and other areas. **Please call Jill Ayres at (608) 756-6713 or Jackie Lee at (608) 756-6739.**

Check out our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MercyhealthVolunteersSouthernWI/>

We have volunteer opportunities in these areas

Gift Shop	Meals On Wheels	House of Mercy Homeless Center
Castaways Thrift Shop	Reception (front desk)	Escorting patients/visitors
SOS	Sewing, crafts, knitting	Cookie sales
Hospice	Pet Peace of Mind	Coffee cart
Safe Connect	Healing Tones	Newsletter
Oncology	Love Light Tree	Holiday Market
Health fairs and health screening		

Join our Facebook group: www.facebook.com/groups/MercyhealthVolunteersSouthernWI/

News from the House of Mercy Homeless Center

Our Volunteers and Our Children

Tammie King-Johnson, Manager, House of Mercy Homeless Center



Last year, over 500 students were identified as homeless in the School District of Janesville. With the start of another school year, these staggering numbers weigh heavy on my mind and heart. Homelessness can have a tremendous impact on children—their education, health, sense of safety, and overall development. Every kid needs positive social connections, which are even more important for children in transition. I'm comforted by the fact that we're all in this together. While living at the House of Mercy, kids have an opportunity to interact with our wonderful volunteers who show them love and concern and serve as an additional positive adult role model!



Happy Anniversary, House of Mercy Volunteers!

On August 5, we celebrated our 22nd anniversary of providing services to homeless families and single women in our community. For 22 years, you, our caring and committed House of Mercy volunteers, have positively impacted the lives AND health of children and families in our community. Thank you!

Business Volunteer Recognition

We would like to thank all of the local businesses for their support of the House of Mercy!

A special thank you to **Palmer Dental** who recently provided free emergency care to one of our shelter residents. Palmer Dental staff also provided care to the children in the family while Mom was being cared for by Dr. Mathew Palmer.

Annual Volunteer Picnic

The House of Mercy extends a great big thank you to all of our volunteers who attended the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic on Saturday, July 21. Lunch was catered by Mercyhealth Food Services and volunteers entered raffles to win fantastic prizes. The picnic gave us the opportunity to thank all of our volunteers for their ongoing support and their dedication to give back to the community. Our volunteers are filled with an enormous amount of compassion and awareness—something that our community truly needs. They see the need and respond. We continue to show our gratitude and give thanks to our volunteers for their kindness, care, and for being the inspiration the world needs.

Brooke Anderson, Operations/Volunteer Coordinator

Furthermore, I would like to reflect on our outgoing MHS Association of Volunteers President, Arlene Knudson, for her dedication to the past two years. Acting as a volunteer since 2007, Arlene has always been wonderful and helpful to everyone on the board. She has been an influential volunteer ambassador and a reliable individual for always performing her service with dedication and pride. I would like to thank Arlene for going above and beyond and for her hard work as the Volunteer Board President, leaving a lasting impact on Mercyhealth. I am also happy to announce Arlene will be continuing in her dedication to Mercyhealth as the chairperson for the front desk reception, which she has been serving in addition to her position as president. Thank you, once again, Arlene, for the past two wonderful years as board president!

Judy Jaggard, our new president, will start her assigned post in January. I am thrilled for Judy to bring to the board her expertise of serving on many boards in the community. She also serves on the board for the Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) as the Southern District Chairperson. We all look forward to working with Judy in her role as president of Mercyhealth Association of Volunteers and to seeing the great impact she will make.

Lastly, I would like to thank the volunteer staff, Jackie, Colette and Cara, for their dedication to the department as they have all been working very hard on many projects over the past several months. Jackie has been very busy with the teen volunteers over the summer. She worked with teens on special projects while also stepping up to clean all the wheelchairs at the Janesville hospital from head to toe. Cara has been working on promoting Mercyhealth Safe Connect by attending various programs in the community to get the word out and Colette has been working with Family Care billing and on special projects in the office. I would like to express great gratitude for Jackie, Colette and Cara's dedication and uplifting spirits in Volunteer Services in addition to all of the extensive contributions by our volunteers!

Please mark your calendars with all the upcoming events we have in store for a very busy fall and winter. You will be receiving a lot of information via mail at varying times so please keep an eye out and read in detail!

I wish all of you and your families a wonderful, nostalgic holiday season.

Regards,

Jill Ayres

Manager, Mercyhealth Association of Volunteers
Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center—Janesville
(608) 756-6713

Mornings with Olive

By Nancy Leafblad, MDiv, Chaplain

I was without a puppy for over five years. I spent 16 years with my last dogger and it took me the five years to even consider letting another little one worm her way into my heart. Then entered Olive in a moment of spontaneity. She is a black and white English Springer Spaniel, named after the sibling of our last springer. She won me over in a moment by wrapping her little puppy warmth around my neck. I was smitten.

Olive and I spend every morning together. I'm usually up by 5 am and we're outside shortly after that, come rain or come shine. She is a bundle of energy even at that hour, bounding with the joy of a new day. With one end of the retractable leash connected to her collar and the other firmly in my grip, she leaps around the yard, taking in all the new smells the night has brought. Often her head is held high into the breeze to take in the fragrance of the neighborhood beyond our yard. Her joy is evident in every movement she makes. Depending on the morning, I'm either laughing with her or trying to get her to quickly find her spot so I can go back into the house for my first cup of tea.

We could debate whether or not animals are aware that each day is a gift, but judging by Olive's behavior, you might lose that debate if you believe they don't. I know intellectually that each day is a gift from God, but I must admit, I don't always behave in a way that reflects that knowledge. I know people who do: People who have come close to losing a next day; people who have watched others lose a next day; people who know their next days are limited. They grasp that each day is a gift and they receive it with joy, smelling out all it has for them, and living within whatever the gift brings.

In reality, each of our next days has a limit, but as long as the next one keeps coming, we can be intentional about receiving the next with whatever it brings. We are never alone in our days; God is ever present to bring us through them.

*Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed. For his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.
~Lamentations 3:22-23~*

Spotlight

Insight from Karleen Wojczak



After many years of dreaming about my future career as a Physician Assistant, the dream became a reality this June. The journey began when I started volunteering at the north entrance of the hospital in 2011 when the main lobby was under construction. I was only 16 and loved the opportunity to get my foot in the door and start exploring the medical field. I continued through a few years in high school and then returned every summer to volunteer while in school at Marquette University in Milwaukee. Through the years I worked in the gift shop, labor and delivery, and the emergency department.

Jill Ayers wrote a letter of recommendation that helped me get admitted to the Marquette University Physician Assistant Program. During my final year of PA school, I had clinical rotations in various specialties in locations across the country. I was very lucky to set up a rotation with Mercyhealth hematology and oncology as my final rotation this spring. I would check in with Jill, Jackie and everyone at the volunteer office just to say hello and tell them how much I was enjoying my experience with the Hematology and Oncology service.

After finding out that the clinic was considering adding me to the team, I ran down to the volunteer office to do a little happy dance with Jill. In May, I graduated from Marquette with a master's in

In our 2015 newsletter, Karleen was featured under our volunteer spotlight as a volunteer. Now she is a Physician Assistant at Mercyhealth. She was quoted as saying, "My volunteering experiences have solidified my interest and reassured me a medical field would be the right fit for me." We are so proud of you Karleen!

Physician Assistant Studies, passed my board exam in June, and started working with Dr. Emily Robinson in the hematology and oncology clinic shortly thereafter. As I've settled into my new position, I've had such great support from the team. There is a lot to learn and some days it gets chaotic but I truly love what I do. It is a blessing to be able to help patients through treatment and follow patients for years and years afterwards.

Mercyhealth has been a big part of my journey. I shadowed a handful of times in the OR, spent three months in a high school shadowing internship at Mercyhealth Mall Urgent Care, and took part in Mercyhealth Medical School for Teens in addition to my volunteer experiences and my clinical rotation. Being able to work for an organization that has helped me so much through this process feels great. I love being able to tell my story as I've come full circle and put in all of the hard work to make my dream career a reality, and of course I am so grateful to be back home in Janesville.

Karleen Wojczak, MPAS, PA-C
Hematology/Oncology Department
Mercyhealth Michael Berry Building, Janesville

Annual Holiday Market at Mercy Center

November 4-6



Jill Ayres, Sherry Dux,
and **Ginny Duller** prepare for a day of shopping for the Holiday Market.

Before we know it, the smell of Thanksgiving turkey will fill the air, jingle bells will be ringing in every store, children will eagerly be awaiting gifts under the tree, and most importantly, the time to spend with loved ones and having a giving, thankful spirit will be upon us. That's right—only short time till the holiday season begins. Now is the time to prepare for the upcoming season to ease stress and have more enjoyment as the holidays arrive. Don't fret! We are ready to help you accomplish this by inviting every individual of every age to the annual Holiday Market. Remember to come early as there are limited amounts of hot-ticket items.

This year, the Holiday Market will be at Mercyhealth Conference Center on:

Sunday, November 4, 10 am - 4 pm
Monday, November 5, 7 am - 6 pm
Tuesday, November 6, 8 am - 1 pm

We have been very busy preparing a large selection of anything holiday to make the perfect gifts for the special people in your life, along with treats for yourself. This year, there will be festive holiday décor in the new colors and texture trends for the 2018 holiday season. Of course, there will also be stocking stuffers, adorable toys, books and accessories to put the magic in the holiday season for the special little ones in your life.



Just wait till you see our boutique! New this year, we have fun and exciting fabrics and designs that are easy on the eyes and soft to the touch. You'll love our new collections of handbags, hats, jewelry, socks and much more for all ages.

There's more! We haven't forgotten about the furry family members. There will be lots of pet gifts, from treats, toys and more, that will make you and your pet smile. You don't want to miss out on this unique opportunity to make the holiday season special for that special furry friend of yours.

Now, what about the center of activity during the holidays? You don't want to miss out on any kitchen, cooking, or baked good necessities to make your holidays special. For supper gatherings with family and friends, the popular food dips and beer breads are back to tempt your savory senses. There will also be wonderful and tasty soups, decorative and scrumptious mints, and yummy caramel corn that will make everyone smile. We haven't forgotten about hostess gifts, either, as a way to say thank you for the hard work put in and hospitality for the event hosts.

Who knows what other surprises we will have in the Holiday Market this year? There is only one way to find out. We look forward to seeing you at the best event of the year.

News from the Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Walworth

Volunteering is continuing to make a long-term impact on our patient's lives here at Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Walworth in the Lake Geneva, WI area. We are preparing for the fall season and growing appreciative of the soon-to-be, color-changing leaves, tourists venturing into our stores for seasonal trinkets, and our gift shop autumn merchandise rolling in. We are specifically appreciative of our volunteers this past summer. Our volunteers continue to act as goodwill ambassadors through providing quality services to our patients, visitors and staff. They make positive impacts at the Information Desk, gift shop, and as the lunch serving committee for patients receiving chemotherapy. Further, we are thrilled for our volunteers to be branching out and becoming involved with the Mercyhealth Safe Connect program! We cannot wait to see the great benefits this will bring to our Lake Geneva community.

We continue to welcome new volunteers to our ranks, allowing us to continue to serve our guests even as winter approaches and some volunteers depart for warmer climates or return to college towns to pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees. Through this expansion, we are also working on extending the volunteering opportunity to high school students while adding some Saturday hours to the Information Desk. We are excited to be expanding to the weekend shift as patient care will drastically improve through eliminating gaps in care with covering our busy weekend periods.

Plans are underway for our **4th Annual Silent Auction** to be held **Thursday-Friday, December 6-7, 9 am-4 pm** in conjunction with our **Holiday Sale** in the gift shop. The silent auction includes baskets, miniature trees and wreaths that are made and donated by volunteers or partners. This event has always been very well received by patients, visitors and staff, and this year promises to be bigger and better as we add more gifts to our auction. The holiday sale will feature 25% off gift shop purchases, free holiday giftwrapping, and cookies for all as a special added treat. So, stop in to support Mercyhealth Walworth and feel free to shop our area waterfront boutiques to receive the full Lake Geneva experience.

As we make an impact on our patients' lives, we are thrilled to receive feedback from our volunteers on how volunteering at Mercyhealth is also bettering their lives! Our very own volunteer, **Phoebe Nelson Oshirak, RN**, can greatly testify to this:

Unfortunately, a question many senior citizens find themselves wondering is: "Am I still useful?" After retirement, I commonly felt this way as if I should register as a bona fide, card-carrying couch potato. I specifically felt this way as many of my responsibilities diminished after I retired and my children were out of the house raising their own families. It is not a surprise that after all the time of holding responsibilities in our earlier years that we are now at a loss of how to fill the idle time we now hold in our hands. It was not until I became a Mercyhealth Volunteer with Mercyhealth Walworth that this feeling of worthlessness and depression disappeared.

Newly widowed in 2001, I had even more time on my hands and decided to invest my time into Mercyhealth Walworth. The result was a lifting of my spirits, a decrease in my feeling of loneliness, and a newfound sense of purpose. Volunteering here has been more satisfying, healthier and rewarding than spending my days golfing, having lunch with the girls, or playing Bridge or watching TV just to pass the time. Instead of relying on prescription medicine to overcome the uselessness feeling, I highly suggest the all-natural remedy of community volunteerism. I have met many supportive people who have turned into life-long friends. Volunteering has allowed me to give back to the community that has been so good to me all these years. Now I find myself asking, "Retirement? What is that?" If you find it is not all it was cracked up to be, go ahead, try volunteering! Find a cause that you hold close to your heart and give it your all. See the difference it will make in your life. I promise, you will not regret it.

A letter from our presidents



Judy Jaggard

From our New President: Excited to Get Started!

As I look forward to assuming the role of President of the Mercyhealth Association of Volunteers, I have some thoughts about challenging you, our current volunteers. I would like each volunteer to find one friend and invite them to volunteer at the hospital. These new volunteers could come from a variety of places—your family, your neighbors, your circle of friends, your social groups—you get the idea—from everywhere! This is something Arlene Knudson has stressed as president, as well as Sherry Dux when she was our membership chair. We cannot encourage you enough. New volunteers come through personal contacts. Share your enthusiasm with everyone.

I would also encourage you to add one or two more hours to your volunteer service time. If you're unable to fit time in your current service area, perhaps you'd be able to add an hour or two to another area. Talk with Jill to see where you might fit.

Following Jill's thoughts on reminiscing, I thought back to my first experience as a volunteer at Mercyhealth in the early 80s. My mother, Anita Sass, got me involved working in the gift shop and then with Meals On Wheels. I've been volunteering here ever since—and the rewards keep coming back to enrich my life.

Thanks to our outgoing board members for their dedicated service on the board. Those completing their service this year are:

Heidi Huettl – Castaways
Chuck Elliott – Escorts
Kathie Moran – House of Mercy Homeless Center
Bob Knudson – Meals On Wheels
Lisa Brown – Newsletter
Coral Nyquist – Public Policy
Steve Gaffney – Safe Connect



Arlene Knudson

From Our Previous President: Great Spring 2018 and an Even Better Fall 2018!

Isn't it amazing how fast we transition from one season to the next? We are now enjoying all the colors of fall with the anticipation of holidays and family and friends gathering together. It is also the time to highlight our calendar for upcoming events.

- The Janesville Holiday Market will be Sunday - Tuesday, November 4 - 6, so make plans to shop for gifts and beautiful holiday items.
- The Fall Membership Luncheon will be held at the Janesville Country Club on Thursday, November 15, 11 am. Don't forget to shop at Castaways to pick up a "new" item to wear.
- The Love Light Tree fundraiser is under way. The tree-lighting ceremonies will occur in three different locations. Both Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Walworth and Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center–Janesville (at the main entrance) will be on Monday, December 3, 6 pm. The tree-lighting for Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Harvard will also be on Monday, December 3, 5 pm.
- The Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Walworth Silent Auction and Holiday Sale will be Thursday - Friday, December 6 - 7, 9 am - 4pm.

As 2018 winds down, my term as president also ends. It has been both an honor and a joy to represent Mercyhealth volunteers these last two years.

As many of us can say from the volunteer perspective, volunteering at Mercyhealth gives a sense of giving back to the community, professional/personal development, and the unique opportunity to make lives better! Pass on the blessing of volunteering by inviting your friends and neighbors to join our organization! It is a great way to meet new people and make new friends. It gives a sense of accomplishment and a feeling of helping someone else in both large and small ways, even with just a smile and kind word.

My term as president may be ending, but I will still be a proud Mercyhealth volunteer at the front desk in the hospital lobby, delivering Meals On Wheels or working with the SOS group.

I am looking forward to seeing YOU as you continue your volunteer duties.

Volunteer Board Members



Our 2017 board members who attended the Fall Membership Luncheon

Back row (l-r): Elaine Lawrence, Gift Shop Co-Chair; JoAnn Reed, outgoing Gift Shop Co-Chair; Kathie Moran, incoming House of Mercy Homeless Center Chair; Sherry Dux, Past-President and Mentoring Chair; Judy Jaggard, President Elect; Jean Lademann, Hospitality House Chair; Sue Kumlien, Health Education and Scholarship Chair; Bob Knudson, Meals On Wheels Chair.

Front row (l-r): Nancy Verhoeven, outgoing House of Mercy Homeless Center Chair; Sue Borman, incoming Membership Chair; Linda Bigelow, Secretary; Coral Nyquist, Public Policy Education Chair; Arlene Knudson, President and Front Reception Chair; Pris Meyer, SOS Chair; Becky Esselman, Mercyhealth Safe Connect Chair; Sandi Plosaj, Hours and Awards Chair.

Not pictured: Bill Anacker, Treasurer; Chuck Elliott, Escort Chair; Diana Pearse, incoming Gift Shop Co-Chair; Suzanne Moore, Hospice Chair; Linda Olander, Hospitality Cart Chair; Lisa Brown, Newsletter Chair; Sharon Henning, Oncology Chair; Steve Gaffney, Mercyhealth Safe Connect Co-Chair; Carol Gilhooley, Walworth Co-Chair; Linda Varva, Walworth Co-Chair.

Stay Strong, Stay Independent—Work to Prevent Falling with Safe Connect

Five Steps to Preventing Falls among Your Older Loved Ones

According to the National Council on Aging (NCOA), falls are not a normal part of aging, but they are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for Americans over the age of 65. This is why Mercyhealth partnered with the NCOA and the Falls Free Coalition to celebrate **Falls Prevention Awareness Day on September 22**.

Falls can result in hip fractures, broken bones, and head injuries. This causes an older adult to become fearful or depressed, making it difficult to stay active. If you have an aging loved one, helping them reduce their risk of falling is a great way to help them stay healthy and independent as long as possible.

Here are some common factors that can lead to a fall:

- **Balance and Gait:** As we age, most of us lose some coordination, flexibility and balance due to being less active. Losing these conditions makes it easier to fall.
- **Vision:** As our eyes age, less light reaches the retina. This makes it harder to see contrasting edges, tripping hazards, and obstacles.
- **Medications:** Some prescriptions and over-the-counter medications can cause dizziness and dehydration. Interactions with each other can also lead to a fall.
- **Environment:** Most seniors have lived in their homes for a long time and have never thought about simple modifications that might make it safer as they age.
- **Chronic conditions:** More than 80% of older adults have at least one chronic condition like diabetes, stroke or arthritis. Often, these health conditions increase the risk of falling because they result in lost function, inactivity, depression, pain or multiple medications.

There is good news! Most falls can be prevented.

Consider these suggestions for your older loved ones:

- 1. Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe:** Talk to your older loved ones about falling. Many recognize it is a risk, but believe it won't happen. If falling, dizziness or balance is a concern, suggest they discuss it with their health care provider. Their provider can do a fall assessment and suggest a prevention program or service.

2. Ask about their last eye checkup: Make sure your older loved ones have current eyeglass prescriptions and that they are using their glasses as directed. Tint-changing lenses can be hazardous when going from bright sun into darkened buildings. Bifocals can be problematic on stairs, so be cautious. Ask their optometrist for suggestions on ways to improve their vision or prevent falls.

3. Holding onto walls and furniture when walking, or having difficulty getting up from a chair: These are signs that your loved one could use the help of a physical therapist to improve their balance, strength and gait through exercise. A physical therapist might suggest a cane or walker, and show the person how to safely use them. Make sure your loved ones follow their advice. Poorly fitted or improperly used walking aids can increase the risk of falling.

4. Talk about their medicines: If your older loved one is having a hard time keeping track of medicines or is experiencing side effects, encourage them to discuss their concerns with their doctor and pharmacist. Beware of non-prescription medicines that contain sleep aids, including painkillers with PM in their names. These can lead to balance issues and dizziness.

5. Do a walk through safety assessment of their home: There are many simple and inexpensive ways to make a home safer. Here are some examples:

- **Lighting:** Increase lighting throughout the house, especially at the top and bottom of stairs.
- **Stairs:** Make sure there are two secure rails on all stairs.
- **Bathrooms:** Install grab bars in the tub/ shower and near the toilet. Consider using a shower chair and a hand-held shower wand.
- **Trip hazards:** Get rid of throw rugs, move extension cords out of walkways, pick up clutter, and replace broken or unstable furniture.

If you are concerned about a loved one falling in their home, consider the use of a personal emergency response system, like **Mercyhealth Safe Connect**. It is ideal for elderly and disabled individuals who want to stay in their homes, and be independent, safe and comfortable. With Safe Connect there is always a 24/7 connection to family members or friends to help your loved one get back on their feet from a fall. To learn more about Mercyhealth Safe Connect, visit mercyhealthsafeconnect.org for electronic applications and brochures or feel free to call **Colette Finn or Cara Arena at (608) 756-6784** for further inquiry.



Scholarship Recognition Reception

We held our first Scholarship Recognition Reception on Monday, May 14 at the Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center–Janesville. We celebrated our 12 scholarship winners from Rock and Walworth counties in Wisconsin, and McHenry County in Illinois, where Mercyhealth clinics are located. Each student received a scholarship certificate after they spoke about their future goals and how this scholarship will help them achieve those goals. Everyone agreed that this was a unique event where everyone got to know our scholarship winners. Congratulations to all of them!

Front row, left to right: Lizette Calixto of Badger High School in Lake Geneva, WI; Faith Tullar of Craig High School in Janesville, WI; Brielle Valet of Craig High School in Janesville, WI; Sarah Kubiak of Craig High School in Janesville, WI; Riley Davis of Big Foot High School in Walworth, WI; Olivia Smith of University of Oshkosh in Oshkosh, WI; Samantha Kessenich of Evansville High School in Evansville, WI; Stephanie Hiebert of Whitewater High School in Whitewater, WI; and Liam Ryan of Crystal Lake South High School in Crystal Lake, IL.

Back row, left to right: Chuck Elliott, Sue Kumlien, Pris Meyer, Becky Esselman, Sherry Dux, Lisa Brown, and Arlene Knudson – members of the Mercyhealth Association of Volunteers Board.

Ode to Volunteers – An Ode to the Past!

What are volunteers?
Volunteers are like Fords: They have a better idea.
Volunteers are like Coke: They are the real thing.
Volunteers are like Pan Am: They make the going great.
Volunteers are like Pepsi: They’ve got a lot to give.
Volunteers are like Dial soap: They care more: Don’t you wish everybody did?
Volunteers are like Vo5 Hairspray: Their goodness holds in all kinds of weather.
Volunteers are like Hallmark cards: They care enough to give the very best.
Volunteers are like Amoco: You expect more and you get it.
But most of all, Volunteers are like Frosted Flakes:
They’re G-R-R-R-E-A-T!



Introducing your board members

Linda Olander, Chairperson for Hospitality Cart

Linda Olander has been married to Ken Olander for 44 years. They have two children, six grandchildren and one great-grandson. Linda retired from Blackhawk Community Credit Union in March of 2014, but wanted to stay busy and accepted a part-time position at Riverside Golf Course. As 2015 came around, Linda felt the need to give back to the community through volunteer work and joined Mercyhealth Volunteer Services. Linda has been a board member for three years as the Chairperson for Hospitality Cart! Linda is thoroughly trained on the hospitality cart and can be found in Mercyhealth the 1st, 3rd and 5th Friday of each month. Linda also contributes with cookie sales and the holiday market.

Suzanne Kumlien, Local Health Education Chair

Sue graduated from Mercy Hospital School of Nursing in 1969 and has always worked for Mercy Hospital. After retiring in 2000, she returned to nursing one month later because of her love for the field and did not retire again for 15 more years in 2016. Sue first began volunteering for Meals On Wheels and is now involved on the volunteer board as the Health Education Chair. Sue integrates the State Health Education projects and programs into our Health Education programs reporting on activities concerning State and Federal Health topics. Sue’s biggest joy is coordinating with the volunteer office staff to facilitate the distribution of scholarship applications to high schools where Mercyhealth operates clinics in Rock, Walworth and McHenry counties. Sue played a major role in the twelve \$1,000 scholarships students received at our first annual presentation last year.

Bill Anacker, Treasurer

Bill joined the Mercyhealth Association of Volunteers when asked to take over the Treasurer position for Brad Bastian who moved away from Janesville in 2015. With Bill being retired and having a background in finance, he was the perfect fit! Bill’s position requires him to write checks for the volunteers, make deposits, and make monthly and

annual reports for the Volunteer Board. Bill enjoys working as a volunteer because of working with other volunteers and using that opportunity to give back to the community. Bill also sits on the Volunteer Board of Directors for the Salvation Army.

Elaine Lawrence, Gift Shop Co-Chair

Elaine is a past president of our Association and has been either chair or co-chair of the hospital gift shop for the last nine years. She enjoys getting to know the partners and families of patients. Elaine says she gets more out of volunteering than she gives. She enjoys shopping for clothing, scarves, jewelry, and purses for the gift shop.

Suzanne Moore, Hospice

Suzanne has volunteered in Hospice since 2015. Her board responsibilities include listening to information shared and passing on meeting highlights to her superiors. As Suzanne enjoys giving back to the community, she is also a very faithful and reliable volunteer who is always looking to give more to others! When Suzanne is not making an impact at Mercyhealth, you can find her volunteering at ECHO, the local food pantry, four days a week.

Linda Bigelow, Secretary

Over three years ago, Linda and her husband moved to Janesville to be closer to their son, daughter and 10 grandchildren. As Linda and her husband were both retired, they were ready to settle into their “forever” home. After moving, Linda was looking for volunteer opportunities in the area that would complement her 45-year career in education and specifically, the previous 23 years of being an administrator for Jefferson College in Missouri, where she retired as Dean of Learning Resources. During her career, Linda was actively involved in the community and in multiple service organizations, and wanted to continue serving in some service-oriented capacity. Fortunately, Linda discovered the Mercyhealth Hospital volunteers and started at the Reception Desk. Linda also served on the SOS team, a group of congenial volunteers who help with

Introducing your board members

(continued from page 7)

one-time projects that spring up, such as special mailings. After her first year volunteering, Linda was asked by the Nominating Committee to serve as the incoming Secretary and she has enjoyed the role ever since! As Linda has met so many other dedicated board members who make it possible to provide so many services to help the people in our community and to support the hospital, Linda is a huge advocate to encourage everyone in the community to become involved with volunteering, to have fun, and give back to our community!

Alexx Salazar, House of Mercy Homeless Center

Alexx grew up in South Beloit, IL, and graduated from South Beloit High School in 2009. She went to college right after graduation and spent two years at Marquette University and then two years at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. In 2016, she graduated with her Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Relations and Marketing.

She started her banking career in 2015 as a part-time teller for Blackhawk Bank. She moved her way up the teller levels to become a Universal Banker and then a teller supervisor. In June, Alexx was promoted to Assistant Vice President Branch Manager/Teller Supervisor of the Janesville location.

Alexx enjoys traveling and sightseeing. She is very excited for her trip planned to Spain next March. She has a toy poodle at home that needs all her love and constant attention. She enjoys volunteering in her community and giving back. While at Blackhawk Bank, she has volunteered with numerous organizations including Meals On Wheels of Beloit.

News from the Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Harvard

Located in the quaint town of Harvard, IL, Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Harvard continues to spread the Mercyhealth mission through community betterment and a focus on increasing the quality of care. With Harvard being known for one-of-a-kind baked goods and a small-town feel, we guarantee you will not only be greatly taken care of in our facility, but also will enjoy the town outside our medical center walls.

Our volunteers greatly contribute to this welcoming atmosphere for our patients through exceling in knitting and crocheting items at an all-time high rate. These contributions have not only kept our patients warm, but have created a conversation starter to help our patients feel at home while they are with us. We give a round of applause and a great thank you to our volunteers for their service!

We are also happy to announce our new project underway! Our highly skilled, community Bridge players have met to organize a fundraiser for the Mercyhealth Volunteer Services Department. Through the end of the year, our Bridge players will keep score of winnings in their existing groups and will announce the winner with the most wins around December of 2018. Through \$10 donations from the community per each player per each game, all proceeds will go toward the Mercyhealth Volunteer Services Department to put funds toward increasing volunteer services in both the Harvard and Janesville communities. We are thrilled to see the outcomes of this original fundraiser!

Please reach out to **Lorraine Nolan** at (815) 943-8361 to inquire about joining our Bridge fundraiser or if you are interested in contributing to our knitting and crocheting efforts!

2018 highlights



Left to right: Javon Bea, Bob Knudson, Sandi Ploszaj, Becky Esselman, Judy Jaggard, Arlene Knudson, Jean Lademann, Sherry Dux, and Jill Ayres.

Rockford Hospitals Receive New Name

On Monday, September 10, the Mercyhealth Corporation Board of Directors recognized Javon Bea’s contribution to Mercyhealth’s almost unprecedented organizational growth and success over 30 years. Their unanimous board resolution was to name the Mercyhealth hospitals in Rockford the Javon Bea Hospitals. Javon serves as Mercyhealth’s President and CEO.



Spring Luncheon is All About Giving

On May 2, we held our spring luncheon at the Janesville Country Club. Volunteers were asked to bring in an activity book or crayons/pencils for our young patients. The five boxes of goodies taken back to the hospital were so appreciated by our nurses and staff members. In turn, each volunteer received a blue Mercyhealth t-shirt as a small token of our appreciation for their dedication. **If you did not receive your t-shirt, please call the Volunteer Services Office at (608) 756-6739.** We have them in our office for you.

2018 Calendar of Events

Site key:

MHTC: Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center–Janesville
MHW: Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Walworth
MHH: Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Harvard
MCB: MercyCare Building, Janesville



November

- 4 - Holiday Market, MHTC Conference Center 1128A&B, 10 am - 4 pm
- 5 - Holiday Market, MHTC Conference Center 1128A&B, 7:30 am - 6 pm
- 6 - Holiday Market, MHTC Conference Center 1128A&B, 8 am - 1 pm
- 14 - Linen Sale, MCB lower level, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm
- 14 - Fall Volunteer Membership Drive and Luncheon, Janesville Country Club, 11 am
- 15 - Linen Sale, MHTC Conference Center 1128B, 9 am - 4 pm
- 16 - Linen Sale, MHTC Conference Center 1128B, 8 am - 3 pm
- 27 - Collective Goods, MHTC Conference Center 1128B, 10 am - 4 pm
- 28 - Collective Goods, MCB lower level, 10 am - 3 pm
- 30 - Thanks For Giving luncheon, MHTC Conference Center 1128A&B, 11 am - 2 pm
- 30 - Love Light Tree donations are due. Publication in the December 17 The Gazette

December

- 3 - MHW Nutman Sale, conference room behind cafeteria, 9:30 am - 2 pm
- 3 - Love Light Tree-lighting Ceremony, MHH main lobby, 5 pm
- 3 - Love Light Tree-lighting Ceremony, MHW main lobby, 6 pm
- 3 - Love Light Tree-lighting Ceremony, MHTC main lobby, 6 pm
- 6 - Annual Silent Auction and Holiday Sale, MHW gift shop, 9 am - 4 pm
- 7 - Annual Silent Auction and Holiday Sale, MHW gift shop, 9 am - 4 pm
- 12 - Nutman Sale, MCB lower level, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm
- 12 - Nutman Sale, MHTC G206, 9:30 am - 2:30 pm
- 13 - Nutman Sale, MHTC G206, 9:30 am - 3 pm

A Message from Castaways



Castaways is our thrift shop in Janesville located on Milton Avenue. The shop is run completely by Mercyhealth volunteers, and has been open since 1982. The money raised from sales at Castaways is donated to the House of Mercy, the Hospitality house, and scholarships. So, you can feel confident about where your money is going. Castaways always has wonderful prices and runs a different sale weekly. Merchandise is also constantly changing, so you'll always find something new.

As I recently began volunteering at Castaways, I was drawn to be a part of their mission. Castaways has always been one of my favorite thrift shops. The prices are so much more affordable compared to others while also having the nicest clothing and so many cool vintage pieces. One of my favorite Castaways sections is the large selection of sheer dainty scarves at only 50 cents each. In addition, there is a nice homeware section with the prettiest curtains, linens, and glassware. Be creative! The fun part of thrifting is you can create unique looks that no one else has, while not spending much money.

Since I've started volunteering, I've really felt welcomed by everyone. The volunteers are the kindest you will find

and they really love what they do. I feel like that's what makes Castaways stand out from other thrift shops. Specifically, Sherry is the interim chairperson, and a wonderful chairperson at that. She has been involved for a couple years and says she loves working with the volunteers and socializing with regular customers. She explains, "It's fun to see the happiness customers express after they have found that very special item at such a great price." In fact, Castaways has left this welcoming feel on the community as they were featured in the Great People. Great Stories. Life in Rock County Summer 2018 Edition.

The element of thrifting is exciting and can allow you to create unique looks that no one else has, while not spending much money. Definitely pay Castaways a visit. Its hours are Monday - Saturday, 9 am - 4 pm. And if you're interested in volunteering, I really recommend giving it a shot. Castaways is always looking for new ideas and different perspectives, and we would love to have you as a part of the team.

Erin Tucker
Castaways Volunteer

Hospice Volunteer Spotlight

We Honor Vets Volunteer: Duane Harvey



About Duane: Occasionally, Mercyhealth Hospice admits a veteran who unfortunately does not have much time remaining with us. Duane is one of our “on call” vets who is dedicated to ensuring that all our veterans are honored before passing through a ceremonial pinning and presentation of the American flag. Duane has done several other volunteer jobs over the years, ranging from Boy Scouts to 15 years with Hunter Safety to becoming a Master Mason and a Shriner. Interestingly, Duane was elected president of the Wisconsin Hunter Safety Instructor Association and became a Master of Masonic Lodge, Morningstar#10 in Beloit, and is still active in both today. He also helped start a combined Shrine club in Rock County while helping the Shriners raise money to support their 22 Shriners Hospitals for Children. He can often be found driving a child to Shriners Hospital in Chicago. Duane keeps on giving as he works with the Masons who are one of the oldest philanthropic organizations in the world. His Lodge is open twice a month for Second Harvest to come in and distribute food to those who need it. As such, it has become the largest mobile pantry in Wisconsin. The Masonic Lodge, in conjunction with the Church of the Living Waters, opens their doors to the hungry on Thanksgiving Day for a hot meal.

Why Duane became a We Honor Vets volunteer: Being newly retired, Duane and his wife decided to attend a Fall Senior Fair in Janesville. It was there that they decided hospice was something he could do that would not be a long time commitment, nor physically demanding.

Interesting facts: Duane says, “I am very boring. I am a Vietnam veteran and spent just over two years there. I then came home to hunt deer and was shot in the wrist while doing so.”

Best describing word for Duane: Determined.

How Duane would like to be remembered: As someone who gave back in many ways.

Branch of service: Army, July 1969 to February 1972

Duane’s family: As of this past December, Duane and his wife Karen have been married for 45 years. They have two children, Wendy and Matthew, and four grandchildren, Christina, Jake, Karisa and Savannah.

Volunteer dedication: Hospice volunteer since September 2016

Favorite hospice memory: Duane’s best pinning ceremony memory was of a veteran in Falling Creek Village. Duane did the ceremony while his wife was present. She had fallen and was in rehab care. She could only visit the family for a two-hour period, so the pinning needed to be done during that time frame. When Duane arrived, there were about 15 family members present, all anxious for the ceremony to happen. Duane must have done a good job because before he could leave, the family all shook his hand at least once, most twice. He found out later that they mentioned the ceremony in the gentleman’s obituary. Duane was proud that he could have such a good impact on this family.

Community Health Education (CHE)

Be Aware of the Opioid Crisis



Most likely these days, if you listen to the news, it seems there is some report related to substance use disorder (SUD), also known as the opioid crisis. June 2018 was projected to be the worst on record for heroin deaths in Madison, with 35 known overdoses and 11 suspected heroin causes of death. Newspapers often report at least one or more obituaries from an overdose stating: “left us too soon,” “lost the struggle with addiction,” etc. A nationwide operation is leading to hundreds of arrests of fraudulent health care workers over-prescribing opioids. Of the 600+ people charged in 30 states, five lived in southeastern Wisconsin.

Wisconsin has made progress in reducing the number of opioid prescriptions but, as of 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found emergency room visits for suspected opioid overdoses doubled in Wisconsin. An addiction specialist at the UW-Madison Department of Family Medicine and Community Health says a possible explanation is the people dependent on prescription drugs do not have the time or access to treatment, resulting in turning to illegal drugs. Prescription opioids sold on the street are expensive, so

cheaper, riskier alternatives are sought. For example, Fentanyl from China is cheaper but much more potent, when mixed with heroin, causing the risk of overdose to skyrocket.

Recent discussions have Wisconsin looking at improving access to treatment through what is called a “hub and spoke” system to use primary care in addiction treatment. Wisconsin is also looking to improve care for pregnant women who use opioids. As the Wisconsin “cocaine mom” law can result in jailing pregnant woman for suspected drug abuse, the law is being challenged to solve the issue of lack of seeking treatment due to fear.

As some families are able to acknowledge and talk about the disease that took their loved ones’ lives, others still grieve in silence due to the stigma of this disease. Through learning about and understanding the opioid crisis, recognizing drug dependence as a disease, and looking at chemical changes in the brain due to substance use, we can change this stigma.

Please continue to be advocates to decrease opioid prescriptions, increase access to treatment, and ensuring coverage of prescriptions to manage symptoms of SUD!

Sherry Jelic, Community Health Education,
Partners of WHA