

Communique

Spring
2020

A Newsletter for our Volunteers
at Aspirus Wausau Hospital.

From the Volunteer Board President



by Ann Wicklund

A new volunteer opportunity became available with the opening of the Aspirus Family House on February 10th. The house provides comfortable and safe housing for patients traveling for long-term outpatient care, as well as for families with loved ones that are hospitalized. The home is located close to Aspirus Wausau Hospital on the corner of 28th Avenue and Westhill Drive. The interior design theme is "In Tune with Nature". All sign photos were taken by Aspirus employees throughout Aspirus Wisconsin and Michigan communities. A Monarch butterfly is pictured on the sign for the patio area which is sponsored by Aspirus Wausau Hospital Volunteers.

As we're all aware, a 'Stay Safe at Home' proclamation has been put in place to flatten the COVID-19 curve. It feels like we are in a state of suspended animation.

Like the caterpillar, through the process of metamorphosis evolves into a butterfly, we wait. In the chrysalis phase which seems to be a time when nothing is happening, a remarkable transformation takes place. The beautiful parts of the butterfly develop. Perhaps that is how our world will change when this virus no longer impacts our world in such a dramatic way. This is a time to reflect. Be still. Contemplate where we have been and where we are going.

Aspirus Volunteers are active, dedicated, compassionate people. None of us know when life will return to 'normal' and volunteers can once again return to active service. However, in the meantime, there are opportunities to help. Staying at home is the most important thing all of us can do right now. Perhaps writing a note of thanks and well wishes to those on the front lines of this pandemic will make a positive difference.

During this time, we need to stay positive. Below are a few quotes that may inspire you.

Please take care of yourself. Be safe. Be Kind. Be Well.

"Wherever you turn, you can find someone who needs you. Even if it is a little thing, do something for which there is no pay but the privilege of doing it. Remember, you don't live in the world all of your own." ~ Albert Schweitzer

"Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain loving one another." ~ Erma Bombeck

"The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention." ~ Oscar Wilde





Adjusting to a New Routine

Direct from Yo

We've all been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic at work and in our daily lives. During this unprecedented time, it's important to do our best to keep ourselves safe and healthy. Our everyday is changing, but one thing we can continue to focus on is our own health and wellness.

Aspirus Volunteers are extremely important to our success. You make a difference for our patients and visitors each day. Whether it is delivering flowers or a card to a patient at the hospital or holding the hand of a patient in Hospice, volunteers touch the lives of people in the community.

Here are just a few statistics on the services that Aspirus Volunteers provided this past year from January 2019 to December 2019: 402 adult volunteers and 63 teen volunteers donated over 48,644 hours representing a value of over \$1.23 million in contributed service!

A few ways that volunteers supported Aspirus Wausau Hospital	Funds raised supported
<p>4,267 EZ Rider trips to deliver 6,584 people</p> <p>158 Pet Therapy Visits</p> <p>3,784 pieces of guest mail delivered</p> <p>67 Hospice patients visited for a total of 1,862 hours</p> <p>Teddy Bear Clinic program was hosted by 14 volunteers that provided 627 hours of service.</p> <p>Rainbow's End Day Camp was supported by 567 volunteers that provided 2,607 hours so 63 campers could experience the camp.</p>	<p>\$7,500 in financial support for Rainbow's End Camp for children with special needs</p> <p>\$7,000 in scholarships to high school graduates who served as Aspirus Volunteers</p> <p>\$2,085 for Student Talent Art Review (STAR)</p> <p>\$5,000 for Heart Pillows that are used for recovering Heart & Vascular patients</p> <p>\$8,334 for the Aspirus Family House patio</p> <p>\$1,390 to add phone charging stations in Day Surgery waiting room and Entrance A</p>
<p>Lifeline Medical Response is supported by 11 volunteers who install and service units in subscriber homes in Marathon county. In 2019, there were approximately 700 subscribers.</p> <p>Handmade items such as baby caps, teddy bears, and prayer shawls created by Aspirus volunteers helped support patients and family members</p>	<p>Caring and compassion expressed by volunteers working from home or assisting in office locations:</p> <p>28 Hospice Bereavement volunteers made phone calls and wrote letters to family members whose loved one had died, providing 1,440 hours in 2019</p>

*Even though we may not see you,
we are thinking of you each day.*

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The Aspirus Health Foundation community fundraising events supported programs for patients, families and our community.

In August 2019, volunteers shared their time and talents to help the 13th Annual Aspirus Women's Golf Classic raise \$87,000. This will help children and adult victims of sexual assault and abuse by supporting a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program; support Reach Out and Read - a program used by 13 Aspirus Clinics to help kids build healthy brains; and helped create the Aspirus Family House for families in need of a place to stay during a medical crisis or when traveling for specialty care.

The Festival of Trees, a week-long event in November 2019, was another success because of the support of our community, donors, and over 200 volunteers who helped raise \$223,000 to support Aspirus Comfort Care and Hospice Services, including two community bedrooms at Aspirus Hospice House for patients with identified financial need.

Yes, our Aspirus Volunteers have been busy! I can't thank you enough for all your past help and I am praying for all of you and your safety until we can all be together again volunteering. Some people just make life better for everyone around them. That's how our Aspirus Volunteers are. Your kind hearts and generous souls have blessed so many people. Don't ever forget how much you mean to me and to Aspirus. *Take care and stay well!*

Yo

Special Thanks

Here is an excerpt from a grateful patient's thank you note:

...This first experience at Aspirus was over and above anything we have ever experienced. From the front door to the cafeteria, the people who work and volunteer were very friendly and accommodating 24/7. The décor and cleanliness was seen everywhere. It was an experience we will not forget.

And here is another comment:

...The patient and family really appreciated how well the front desk and the volunteers worked together to keep the families informed. We are very blessed to have such great front desk staff and wonderful volunteers. Please know your good work does not go unnoticed.

Keeping Busy

Aspirus volunteer, Johanna Hougum, has been keeping busy while following the statewide 'Stay At Home' order. Johanna sewed 91 face masks for Aspirus hospital staff. Thank you, Johanna!



Farewell from Kalynn

Dear Aspirus Volunteers,

After 25 years with Aspirus, and most recently 10 years with the Aspirus Volunteers and the Aspirus Health Foundation, I have decided to try something different. On March 23, I will be starting a new career in Stevens Point, Wisconsin with the Sentry Insurance Foundation.

I have loved my career with Aspirus, and am so blessed to have been able to work with so many generous volunteers, donors and colleagues to help patients and families in our hospital, clinics, and community.

I am grateful to have worked with a wonderful team of colleagues who are passionate about the Aspirus Volunteers, and I know that they will continue to provide you with exceptional service and care.

Our Senior Vice President, John Heisler, will provide oversight of the Aspirus Volunteers and Aspirus Health Foundation, working in partnership with Yo Voigt and the team. We look forward to introducing you to the new Executive Director in the near future.

Thank you again for your generosity and support of Aspirus!

Best wishes, Kalynn Pempek



System Wide Grand Rounds Canine Therapy in the Hospital Setting

On January 8, volunteers were invited to attend the presentation “Canine Therapy in the Hospital Setting”. Brigitte Vanle, one of our pet therapy volunteers and a medical student, shared data from her research project on the subject. She was joined by Eileen Guthrie, pet therapy volunteer, and Deb Raatz who shared information on foundational behavioral training for therapy dogs and the Aspirus pet therapy program.



Reminder to all Volunteers – Confidentiality

Aspirus provides vital services in many communities, and a hospital plays a special role in small towns. It is important to remember that our first job as health care providers, staff and volunteers is to care for our patients and protect their right to privacy.

Anyone receiving care at an Aspirus facility can ask to be a “Privacy Patient”. No information about privacy patients can be given out to callers or visitors – we cannot even acknowledge that we have a patient by that name.

On a normal day, people (including reporters) seeking information about a non-privacy patient may be given

an appropriate one-word condition report if they provide the patient’s name. This information is provided by a Hospital Supervisor or a member of the Marketing & Communications team. Refer all information requests to the facility’s communication leader.

Do not discuss patient information with anyone.

Do not tell friends, family or acquaintances about any patient in any way.

Do not discuss a patient’s case, even with a colleague.

Do not read a chart or patient information.

Do not discuss patient information on social media.

In Memorium

Joseph Tikalsky

*volunteered at the Patient Registration Desk in 2016.
He logged 100 hours of service in one year. Joe passed away January 23.*

Daniel Milkovich

*volunteered with the Lifeline program in 2018. He gave 123 hours of service,
installing batteries & buttons in subscriber homes. Daniel passed away February 18.*

Delwin Hoffman

*was a dedicated volunteer with the Lifeline program for 11 years, giving more
than 400 hours of his time. He also volunteered at the Family House until passing away April 10.*



Emergency Code Reminder - Weather Emergencies

With warmer weather finally approaching, so will the possibility of severe weather. Should a tornado watch be issued for the Wausau area, Aspirus will make an announcement over the speaker system stating “Severe Weather Alert Tornado Watch” and will include the end time of the watch. Staff will begin preparations in case a Tornado Warning is issued. In the event of a Tornado Warning, an announcement will be made over the speaker system stating “Severe Weather Alert Tornado Warning” and staff will instruct you where to go for shelter.

MCW Students Volunteering at Aspirus Wausau Hospital

Although the Medical College of Wisconsin-Central Wisconsin (MCW-CW) campus expanded and moved their classrooms across the street from the hospital, many of the students are participating in the Aspirus volunteer program. We currently have medical students volunteering with Lifeline, Pet Therapy, Palliative Care Unit, Medical Surgical Intensive Care Unit, Comfort Cart, Cardiac Rehab gym and Surgery waiting room. What a great collaboration!

Did you know...

You can access your volunteer information online?
To log in, follow these simple steps:

- Go to www.aspirus.org/volunteers
- Choose “Wausau Area”
- On the right side of the page you will find the section “For Current Volunteers”, then click the “Volgistics Login” link.
- Enter your login name and password and click the Go button. Your login name is your email address on file and your password is your volunteer ID number (usually written on the back of your badge).

Once you are logged in, you are able to check your volunteer schedule, log your hours, if necessary, and update your contact information. We also post a schedule of upcoming events and new volunteer opportunities. Check it out. Please contact Shirley if you are having trouble accessing the website.

You are also able to choose your messaging preferences. Please do not “opt-out” of receiving informational emails from the volunteer department. While it is not our only way of communicating important information to you, it is the fastest. Thank you for understanding.



Public Policy Education

by *Cindy Hermel*

In the midst of Governor Tony Evers' Stay at Home Order designed to flatten the COVID-19 curve and protect Wisconsin citizens from the COVID pandemic, federal and state legislatures are scrambling to write and enact legislation to ensure hospitals have the resources needed to continue operations. Hospitals are not only faced with a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), but also with soaring prices for PPE purchases. Hospitals are also faced with a shortage of testing supplies to identify COVID-19 patients.

As hospitals struggle to acquire these critical supplies, federal directives have required the cancelation of elective procedures resulting in significant revenue losses in Wisconsin, estimated to be \$170 million per week. These actions are being required to conserve PPE and ensure hospital bed capacity is available for a potential surge of patients with the Coronavirus. This is creating significant cash flow challenges for hospitals and health systems.

As you can imagine, telehealth services are in great demand. As a result of the public health emergency declared under Governor Evers' Executive Order 72, certain temporary and permanent changes have been made to telehealth policy. Wisconsin Medicaid will now allow remote services utilizing real time technology to include audio-only phone communication for services

that can be delivered with the "functional equivalency" of face-to-face service. Recent concerns for individual privacy under the HIPPA Act and its penalties have been set aside during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Providers may use any non-public facing remote communication product but may not use public-facing applications like Facebook.

Permanent policy changes to telehealth policy include individual mental health and substance abuse practitioner services in settings other than those certified by the Department of Quality Assurance may be reimbursed for telehealth services. Further, individual practitioners of mental health and substance abuse not practicing in a facility certified by the Division of Quality Assurance may also be reimbursed for telehealth services.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have provided federal support for the above telehealth benefits by expanding this benefit on a temporary and emergency basis under the 1135 Waiver of Authority and Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act. Prior to this waiver, Medicare could only pay for telehealth on a limited basis.

Despite the challenges Wisconsin hospitals, health systems and health care providers face during this COVID-19 pandemic, they are doing their best to serve all patients. I know when you have the opportunity, you will express your thanks and appreciation.

Rainbow's End Camp

Summer must be just around the corner because plans have started for Rainbow's End Day Camp in July. Each year we look for exceptional youth volunteers to pair with campers with special needs to assist them with various activities like games, swimming, art projects and many more fun activities. This year's camp runs July 20-24 and July 27-31. The camp will be held at the Boy Scouts of America camp located on Camp Phillips Road in Weston. Volunteers must be at least 14 years old. Apply online at aspirus.org/volunteers. For those entering their senior year of high school, hours volunteered at Rainbow's End Camp will count toward the hourly requirement to be eligible for an Aspirus Volunteer scholarship.



Volunteers in Action - *Volunteer Hours*

DON'T FORGET - Please turn in your hours every month to keep your records up to date. **Thanks for all you do!**

We recognize and thank these volunteers for reaching these service achievements!

100 Hours

Mary Litzenberger
Tom McCool
Rita Rennie

200 Hours

Margaret Brzezinski
Tom Daman
Diana Miller
Kristine Peterson
Patricia Zywicki

300 Hours

John Babel
Corey Higgins
Margaret Rogers
Marge Snippen

400 Hours

Paula Vogt
Esther White

500 Hours

Judy Gorski
Jeff Raasch

600 Hours

Jerry Fochs
Laurie Reinhart
Nettie Sosnoski

700 Hours

Margaret (Peggy)
Klosinski
Mary Ventzke

800 Hours

Steve Hessel
Dawn Merriam

900 Hours

Fred Niemeyer
Jean Richards

1500 Hours

Michael Gilles
Maralee Moellendorf
Donna Rule

2000 Hours

Jeanette Brandt
Ann Goetsch

3000 Hours

Mary Fochs

4000 Hours

Susan McLaughlin

4500 Hours

Jan Molaska

5000 Hours

Sue Wiesneski

6500 Hours

Carol Ruether
Bill Viertel

7000 Hours

Sylvia Erickson

7500 Hours

Lucille Richter

8000 Hours

Nancy Zastrow

10,000 Hours

Dolly Feira

16,500 Hours

Cleo Tyskiewicz

Volunteers

50 Hours

Elizabeth Clancy
Sarah Landeau
Christa Paskey
Riah Weiland

100 Hours

Johanna Hougum
Emily Lindwall

150 Hours

Allison Majernik



Mission of Aspirus Volunteers

The Aspirus Volunteers is an inclusive organization through which people individually, or as a group, volunteer time, talent, and resources to improve the spiritual and physical health and well-being of the residents of north and central Wisconsin, fostering the mission of Aspirus and its subsidiaries.

Gift Shop Coupon

30% off one regular price item

Exclusions include: Cards, candy, balloons, flowers, doTerra, stamps and sale merchandise.

Expires: July 31, 2020



Coffee Shop Coupon

\$1.00 off your purchase of \$4.00 or more

Expires: July 31, 2020



Cookie Sale

March 12

An Aspirus Volunteers cookie sale was held March 12th. Visitors and staff enjoyed the cookies they purchased. Funds earned by selling cookies help support Rainbow's End Camp, Comfort Cart supplies, and other needs approved by the Research and Development Committee.





ASPIRUS®

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Communiqué

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Aspirus Mission

We heal people, promote health and strengthen communities.

Calendar of Events

- May 25:** Memorial Day Holiday (no volunteers scheduled)
- May 26:** Volunteer Board of Directors meeting
- June 23:** Volunteer Board of Directors meeting
- July 1:** Volunteer Cookie Sale
- July 4:** Independence Day (no volunteers scheduled)
- July 20-24:** Rainbow's End Camp
- July 27-31:** Rainbow's End Camp
- August 25:** Volunteer Board of Directors meeting
- August 27:** Volunteer Cookie Sale
- September 7:** Labor Day Holiday (no volunteers scheduled)