

Aspirus Volunteer Newsletter

Summer 2023



Update From Yo Voigt
Director of Volunteers & Guest Services

VALUABLE VOLUNTEERS!

One of the best parts of my job as the Director of Aspirus Volunteers is celebrating National Volunteer week with you. Our Aspirus Volunteers group is dedicated, passionate and you have an uncanny ability to encourage and support our patients, employees and your fellow volunteers. My first volunteer experience was as a “Candy Striper” volunteer with the Red Cross in a nursing home.

I am so proud to have just celebrated 43 years of working for Aspirus; and I have seen so much change in this time. One that has remained constant is the loyalty and service of our volunteers.

Each year the independent sector, with the *Do-Good Institute*, reports the latest value of a volunteer hour - it is currently estimated to be \$31.80, which is a 6.2% increase from 2021 to 2022. We know that putting numbers to volunteer hours never gives them justice, but it is just one way to show the incredible value volunteers make in our communities and Aspirus.

I believe in the saying “take life as it comes, not as you order it.” That sure has been true with us going through a pandemic and all the changes.

We were able to hold our first in-person volunteer banquet since Covid on May 16th. It was a pleasure to see everyone and be together. We even held a fashion show with the Gift Shop volunteers modeling the shop’s clothing.

Thank you for all your help and service at Aspirus. I am so happy to serve in my role and work with all of you. I think of all of you as an extended family and see the importance of you to Aspirus in helping us to fulfill our mission.

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Update From Holly

Hospice & Volunteer
Program Lead

Happy Summer and warmer days!

As you may have seen in my emails, I have a new job title as of May. I am now the Program Lead for Hospice which means I am helping with not only Hospice here, but also in Michigan. I am still working only 4 days a week but hopeful working 5 days will be in my near future.

I have started my garden again this year. My husband and I will be camping most weekends in the month of July and some in August. I got 8 new baby chickens who are doing wonderfully with my adults. Otherwise the weeks seem to be flying by as we enjoy our summer days!

We have some new volunteers to welcome since the last newsletter. Please welcome Valerie Berlik with therapy dog, Niko, Greg Janicek, Cole Knapp, Nicholas Giordano, Gary Froseth, Lynn Kenney, Judy Lakota, and Wolfram Weinberg!

Holly Aschbrenner
715-581-0315



Update From Susan

Lifeline Coordinator

For 40 Years Aspirus Lifeline has helped people remain independent and secure in their homes. Although people think of Lifeline primarily for the elderly who live alone, people of all ages who live alone can benefit from Lifeline.

There are many people in the community who would find it difficult to live in their homes without the support of Lifeline.

Many adult children are subscribing to Lifeline for their elderly parents to give themselves and their parents a feeling of safety and security.

Lifeline brings peace of mind to the user and is also a great relief to family members who know that their loved one will receive appropriate help in an emergency.

If you know of someone that would benefit from having a Lifeline unit, please call 715-847-2781.

Susan Prael, Lifeline Coordinator
Aspirus Wausau Hospital
susan.prael@aspirus.org

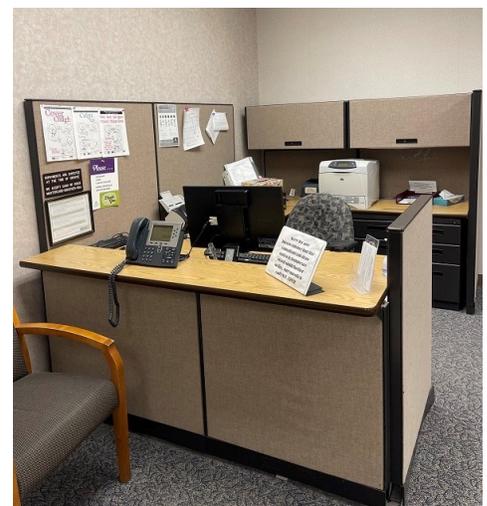


Update From Mary

Volunteer Administrative Coordinator

Hello to all! What a summer it's been so far ... crazy weather, the welcome announcement that the Covid pandemic is finally over, and, of at least equal importance 😊, the Volunteers administrative offices have moved and are now located on the second floor of the hospital in Suite 217. Be sure to stop up and see us. The volunteer lockers have been moved up by us, as well as the volunteer lounge table and we will also have Keurig coffee and a coat rack for your use.

In addition, the volunteer check-in computer has moved right outside our old office to the desk near Patient Registration (see picture). Please be sure to call if you have any difficulty finding us or the relocated check-in computer.



New volunteer check-in location

Mary Dobeck, Volunteer Administrative Coordinator



Update From Sammie

Coffee & Gift Shop Supervisor

Coffee Shop:

Great things happening at the coffee shop!

We now offer ice cream treats and some new bakery items!
 We also brought back Passion Iced Tea – try it with Lemonade!



Gift Shop:

Gift Shop has been a busy place this summer! We are gearing up for fall merchandise. Lots of items are on sale in the shop so come on by!

If you or anyone you know would be interested in volunteering at the Gift Shop, please stop on by! We would love to have them join our team!



Continuing ...
 If you have a Gift Shop coupon from your birthday, you can now bring them in and shop the newly renovated Gift Shop!
 Happy Birthday to you all!




Aspirus Family House Update

We invite you, your friends, your group or organization to cook at home and bring your meal in or cook here at the Family House. You would supply all ingredients; please schedule your date at least 2 days in advance. Our house is filled with amazing people going through some type of medical issue. Some are here for just a short stay but many for 6 and 8 weeks and a homemade meal is a little bit of heaven. If you would like to show off those awesome cooking and baking skills please contact us at 715.847.2548 for more details. Thank you for your kindness in advance!



HIGH NEED ITEMS: Snacks, Lysol disinfectant spray, toilet paper (covered rolls and regular), travel size shampoo and toothpaste, regular coffee, creamer, laundry detergent, and K-cups.

For health and safety concerns, we ask that all donated items be new, unopened, and unexpired.

GIFT CARDS: The Family House also requests the following Wausau area gift cards: grocery stores, gas stations & department stores. For more information about the Family House or to make a donation online, visit aspirus.org/familyhouse or email ahf@aspirus.org.



In lieu of items, you can also make a tax-deductible financial donation.

Please make checks payable to the Aspirus Health Foundation & simply put 'Family House wish list' on memo line.

Hospice House / Seasons of Life Update

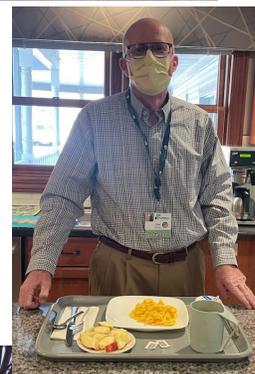
The Wausau Hospice House has been very busy the last few months with many new patients and families coming through, as well as lots of new volunteers! We now have a remembrance tree outside the Hospice House where you can add a name onto a ribbon and tie it on the tree.

On August 8th, we will have a resident turning 100 and will be having a celebration for him with cake!

Also, please welcome our newest Therapy Dog, Niko, with owner, Valerie.

Woodruff Seasons of Life house has a few new employees. Management is still actively recruiting employees to be able to be fully staffed and have all 8 rooms filled. It sounds like August is when this will fully open! Sadly we no longer have a cook and are actively recruiting for this position as well. In the meantime I will be up there every Monday to help with meals for the week.

I will be sending out our Volunteer Luncheon date soon.



THANK YOU ALL!!

Thank you Knitters/Sewers/Crocheters!

A very heartfelt thank you to all the Volunteer Knitters/Quilters/Crocheters/Sewers and our community donors! The Aspirus Birthing Center, NICU, Palliative Care Unit, Hospice, Emergency, etc. departments appreciate the time and talent that goes into making caps, booties, critters, prayer shawls, and blankets just to name a few. For patients and parents, this is a very special touch of compassion and care. The nursing staff enjoy presenting patients with these gifts. It is Aspirus Volunteers that make this possible.

Happy knitting, quilting, crocheting, and sewing to all!





New Volunteer Board members being sworn in

THANK YOU to all our volunteers who attended our annual volunteer banquet and for making every day a wonderful day to work with all you! Without you our jobs wouldn't be possible or nearly as enjoyable.

Congrats to the newest members of the Aspirus Volunteer Board:

- Kay Meyer, Chair
- Clark Loeffel, Vice-Chair
- Kitty Switlick, Secretary/Treasurer





WELCOME ARCHIE!

We have a new Therapy Dog at AWH. Please welcome handler Matt Reinder, and dog Archie a, Bernedoodle. Eileen Guthrie is pictured showing them around.



Congrats to Volunteer, Mary Jo Literski, on receiving the **FIRST EVER VOLUNTEER Sunflower** award! Mary Jo helps two mornings a week at the Day Surgery Desk.

The Sunflower Award is a recognition program at Aspirus Wausau Hospital specifically for support staff for demonstrating Compassion, Accountability, Collaboration, Foresight, and Joy in patient care.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

It's been an exciting summer for our Volunteer program. We have welcomed 8 new volunteers to our Aspirus Wausau Hospital team.



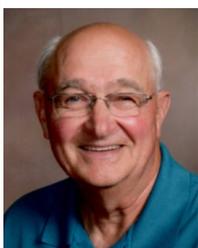
- Joining our team are:
- Karen Commiskey - Family House
 - Monica Krueger - NICU Cuddler
 - Anna Jacobson - Farmer's Market
 - David Gorski - Heart Institute
 - Amy Litzer - Special Projects
 - Cal Heiden - Pharmacy
 - Abigail Warnke - MSICU
 - Allie Frenkel - Coffee Shop & PCU

Welcome to the Aspirus Wausau Hospital team Karen, Monica, Anna, David, Amy, Cal, Abigail and Allie.

If you know of someone that would be interested in volunteering, please have them email:

volunteers@aspirus.org
or call 715-847-2848

In Memory



David Hartman
March 28, 1945 - July 29, 2023
Dave was an AWH volunteer for 10 years serving in many areas of the hospital.



Genevieve Sharkey
July 27, 1930 - December 31, 2022
Gene served as a Eucharistic Minister for 10 years at AWH.

The Student Talent Art Review (STAR) program is an annual contest for area high school students to recognize the outstanding youth artists in our regional community. The STAR program has been held annually since 2005. Winning artwork is professionally matted and framed and displayed with the artist's name and school in a main corridor of the hospital for one year. Awards were presented at the Volunteers Board meeting on May 23. Forty-eight pieces of art were submitted this year from four area high schools with fifteen winners selected. Cash prizes were awarded to the top three entries.



STAR art volunteer judges:

- Mary Robinson
- Bev Smith
- Carolyn Michalski



Left to right: Luella Long (2 artwork pieces), Ann Ebsen (2 pieces recognized with 2nd place winner for artwork, *Wai Po*), Ella Keefe, Kate Saari (Honorable Mention winner for artwork, *For My Grandpa*), Addysen Hase, Alexandria Lopez, Allison Seanor (3rd place winner for artwork, *A Fluttery Feeling*), Evie Del Conte (1st place winner for artwork, *Loading*), Lee Horning (2 artwork pieces), and Charlotte Knihtila. Sydney Crawford and Cassandra Havel were unable to attend. Their artwork pieces are leaning on the far right on the floor.

Here's an excerpt from a past Aspirus Health communication regarding a STAR winner from last year.

Drawing from Our Talent

You can find many things in the halls of an Aspirus hospital. At AWH, you'll find art displayed by local high school students. Currently, first place belongs to a submission called, "*In a Daydream*", by Lilly Thao. The artwork was drawn on newspaper with charcoal and represents Lilly in a daydream enjoying the sun.



"I didn't even know that my teachers were going to submit my work into the contest", says Lilly. "It was actually a pretty crazy year for me". That's because Lilly also found out that year that her teachers submitted her for the United States House of Representatives Congressional Art Competition. Her art titled, "*Queen of Hearts*", was chosen as a winner by a panel of district artists and is now displayed at the U.S. Capital.

Art is clearly a big part of Lilly's life. She credits her sister and her teachers at Wausau West for helping her develop her artistic talents. Next, Lilly is heading to Milwaukee to study art and design. And judging from her recent success, she'll have plenty of opportunities ahead of her. "I can't wait to get out and see the world", says Lilly. Lilly also works at AWH in Food Services.



Volunteer Needs

Please consider helping with the following needs:

Aspirus Wausau Hospital:

Food Service (HIGH NEED): Tuesday-Friday 11am-1:30pm

Palliative Care Unit (PCU): Monday-Friday 8am-12pm

Coffee Shop: Monday-Friday 7am-5pm (usually 2 hour time slot)

Gift Shop: Looking for volunteers interested in being a cashier at the Gift Shop:

Mondays 1p-3p, Tuesdays 1p-3p, Wednesdays 1p-3p, Thursdays 1p-3p, Friday 1p-3p

Mondays 3p-5p, Tuesdays 3p-5p, Wednesdays 3p-5p, Thursdays 3p-5p, Friday 3p-5p

Cancer Center (HIGH NEED): Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays 12-4pm, Fridays 8am-12pm & 12-4pm

EZ Rider: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays 12-4pm (*some restrictions apply)

Day Surgery Waiting Room: Fridays 12-4pm

Heart Institute Waiting Room (HIGH NEED): Mondays 7am-noon & noon-4pm, Tuesdays noon-4pm, Thursdays 7am-noon

Mobile Meals: Sunday-Thursday afternoons/evenings after 2pm for about 1½ -2 hrs.

Comfort Cart (HIGH NEED): According to your availability.

Hospice House - Wausau:

Weekend Meal Help (HIGH NEED): Saturday and Sunday from 8-10am, noon-2pm, 4:30pm-6pm

Briqs Ice Cream: Pick up briqs ice cream on Wednesday afternoons and deliver to Hospice House.

Hospice Transport: Monday-Friday 11:45am-2pm - *Transport prepared meals and grocery items to Hospice House and pick up dishes from previous day. Run to County Market to pick up fresh donuts and any "shopping list" items. Mon, Wed, & Fri stop and drop off frozen meals at Family House. Aspirus Food Services vehicle provided.*

Seasons Of Life - Woodruff:

Holidays: Prepare meal, decorate, and visit with patients on holidays

Aspirus Family House (HIGH NEED):

Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays AM 9 or 10 to 12ish to assist in cleaning and making beds

Bringing in cooked meals like soups or casseroles is always welcome any day!

Hospice Homecare Volunteers:

We're always looking for more homecare volunteers to sit with patients either at home or in facilities once a week for about an hour to socialize, read to, do activities with, or sit with so family can have a break. If you are interested in becoming a homecare visitor, please reach out to Holly Aschbrenner.



We look forward to seeing you!

Please call: Yo at 715-847-2846, Mary at 715-847-2471, or

Holly (Hospice) at 715-581-0315



Summing up Summer

YOUR FAVORITE SEASON IN A FEW FACTS

1 WATERMELON, a popular summer treat, is actually part of the cucumber, pumpkin, and squash family, and it consists of 92% water. The average American consumes 15 pounds of watermelon annually.²

2 The 5 MOST POPULAR summer vacations in the United States include:

1. beaches/oceans (45%)
2. famous cities (42%)
3. national parks (21%)
4. lakes (17%)
5. resorts (14%)³

3 Initially, the FRISBEE® was invented in the 1870s as a pie plate. It wasn't until the 1940s that college students began throwing them around. They have since become a summertime activity staple.⁴

4 Swimming is the fourth most popular recreational activity in the U.S.⁵

5 Every year, the FIRST DAY OF SUMMER, called the summer solstice, falls between June 20 and 22. The day varies due to the Earth's rotation and is not based on our calendar year.⁶

selecthealth.
Live Well

Summer

T	I	O	W	E	E	A	R	T	H
M	A	R	T	X	E	S	W	Q	G
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extra
travel
pool

earth
life
sand
sun

exciting
fun times
fun
Summer

super
words
water



Partners of Wisconsin Health Association (WHA) is an organization that supports healthcare volunteers through education for the health of our communities. They have chosen the topic of mental health to focus on for the next two years. The timing for this topic couldn't be better since Governor Tony Evers has declared 2023 the Year of Mental Health.

We all have mental health just as we have physical health. And we can develop a mental illness just as we can have a physical illness. Mental health encompasses an individual's cognitive, behavioral, and emotional wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and act and helps determine how we handle stress, relationships and make choices. Mental health is important at every age, and it is important to take care of it just as we do our physical health. Good mental health means we can think, feel, and react in ways that allow us to live our lives as best we can. Mental illness can be confusing and frightening because it can affect our thinking, mood, and behavior.

According to the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) one in five adults experience a mental illness each year. This may include an anxiety disorder, a mood disorder, personality disorder, psychotic disorder, eating disorder or substance abuse disorder. Researchers have studied the causes of mental illness and have found no clear reason why some people are affected and others are not. What they have found are factors that contribute to mental illness. These include:

- Biological factors such as genes or brain chemistry
- Life experiences such as trauma or abuse
- Family history of mental health issues

Mental illness does not discriminate. Anyone can experience symptoms or be diagnosed with a mental illness. In 2021, NAMI research found that 1 in 5 American adults experienced some form of mental illness, and 1 in 20 experienced a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or long-term recurring major depression. They also reported that 1 in 6 youths ages 6-17 experienced a mental health condition. They further reported that in Wisconsin 859,000 adults experienced a mental health condition and 70,000 Wisconsinites aged 12-17 experienced depression.

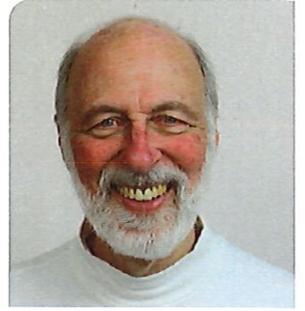
According to Mental Health America (MHA) more people are living with mental or emotional stress than ever before. This is, in part, attributed to a rise in social media, the COVID-19 pandemic, and social trends that have resulted in smaller family units and less community involvement. Nearly half of all Americans struggling with their mental health are untreated due to a lack of health care, a lack of mental healthcare providers in their area, fear of stigmatization, or a lack of knowledge about how to treat their condition.

I would guess that we all know someone who had or is presently dealing with a mental health issue. Over the next two years we will explore various aspects of mental health to increase our knowledge and learn strategies and techniques to monitor our own mental health and learn how we can influence positive changes in mental health public policy. I look forward to learning with you.

Kitty Switlick, Community Health Education for Partners of WHA, North Central District

UNDERSTANDING GRIEF SEMINARS

In-Person | Fall 2023



Bob Baugher, Ph.D., FT (Fellow in Thanatology)

Dr. Baugher is a recently retired Psychology professor at Highline College in Des Moines, Washington where he taught courses in Psychology and Death Education. As a trainer for LivingWorks he has trained more than 1,500 people in suicide intervention.

Dr. Baugher has written books and articles on grief and loss and has given more than 800 workshops across America, including England, South Africa, Australia, Namibia, Australia, Singapore, Canada and the Philippines. He is the professional adviser for both the Seattle widowed support group (Widows Information and Consultation Service) and the South King County Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. [Visit his website at www.bobbaugher.com](http://www.bobbaugher.com)

SEMINAR ONE

Your Story of the Life and Death of Your Loved One

A community seminar for grief, healing and hope

Tuesday, September 12, 2023 | 7-9 p.m.

Complimentary public grief seminar. No charge.

Registration is not required. Offers 2 professional CEUS-DSPS

Grief is complex. Along with it comes a set of grief reactions. One includes the painful step for you to tell the story of the life and death of your loved one. Telling the story of life and loss can help begin to make sense out of the loss and perhaps ease some of your grief. By sharing the heartache with others, we can break down the barriers that make us vulnerable and human. You did not ask for the life you are presently living. However, by building resilience, you can learn to live a life your loved one would be proud of. This presentation is for you if you play a key role in helping someone through grief or if you are struggling with telling your story. This program will help you understand the importance of Story in the lives of people struggling with significant loss in their lives. For full description, objectives, and professional CEUs, visit the website. www.wingsgrief.org

Professional CEUs applied for by WI DSPS. Check our website for a posting about the approval of CEUs.

Both Seminars will be held at
Holiday Inn & Suites-Cedar Creek
1000 Imperial Avenue, Rothschild WI

For more information, contact:
Wings-a Grief Education Ministry
Nan Zastrow 715.845.4159 or email nanwings1@gmail.com

SEMINAR TWO

Coping with the Trauma of an Unexpected Death

A seminar that explores grief and compassionate bereavement support

Wed., Sept. 13, 2023 | 9:00 a.m.—Noon | Fee: \$50

Registration Required: Pre-Register Online at www.wingsgrief.org or register at the door.

As we are well aware, unexpected and traumatic death such as suicide, homicide, accident, medical mistakes, and overdose can intensify grief reactions. Even in the case of a terminally ill person, the death may occur in a way that seems sudden. How an individual receives notification of the death and the support received (or not received) from professionals and family can complicate the grieving process. Trauma includes images of pain, struggle, and fear that challenges the survivor's ability to cope. In this seminar, we will explore how sudden death can create a sense of powerlessness and can affect the way people cope with guilt, anger, obsessive thoughts, sadness, and other grief reactions. We will finish with positive strategies to help survivors. For full description, objectives, and professional CEUs, visit the website. www.wingsgrief.org

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

(For Wed. Sept. 13, 2023 - \$50)

Mail to: Nan Zastrow, 302 S. 56th Ave., Wausau, WI 54401

Advance Registration: To save time, mail your check with form to Wings.

Save a Seat: Pre-register online at www.wingsgrief.org. your voucher will be held at the door and payment can be made by cash or check the day of the event.

Name _____
Company _____
Mailing Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Presented by:



Partner Sponsor



Presented by Wings™ a Grief Education Ministry who partners with Aspirus Comfort Care and Hospice Services to provide these seminars as a community service. Other major sponsors include Brainard Funeral Home, Helke Funeral Home, and Peterson/Kraemer Funeral Homes & Crematory. For a complete list of sponsors, visit www.wingsgrief.org