

Aspirus Volunteer Newsletter

Fall 2022



Update From Yo Voigt Director of Volunteers & Guest Services



INSTRUCTIONS FOR LIVING A LIFE

Pay attention.
Be astonished.
Tell about it.

I recently found a quote, which I just love and it's so true.

"The chief prevention against getting old is to remain astonished."
(Source: *103 Bits of Advice I Wish I Had Known*)

I am astonished every day I come to work at Aspirus. I get the pleasure of seeing so many volunteers returning and welcoming new volunteers.

Recently we have been seeing more "normal things" return.

- A volunteer fair at Wausau West & United Way was held where we could recruit for new volunteers.
- Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association held an "in person" conference and Aspirus Volunteers were presented a WAVE Award for Community Service for our Rainbow's End Camp for children with special needs.
- Pet Therapy volunteers are back visiting patients.
- We have a mini Gift Shop open in our Starbucks location.
- The Comfort Cart is returning providing free items to patients and visitors.
- Our Linen Sale fundraiser returned selling blankets and sheets.
- Festival of Trees is being held again "in person" this fall.

Thank you Aspirus volunteers for all the ways you help patients, staff and families here every day. It is an honor to work with you and see you in action as you help others.

In This Issue:

- Update from Yo
- Update from the Volunteer Coordinators
- Update from Lifeline
- Volunteer Experiences
- In Memoriam
- Pet Therapy Volunteers
- Update from the Coffee & Gift Shops
- Family House Needs
- Hospice House & Seasons of Life Update
- Volunteers in Action
- Volunteer Needs

...and More!

Update From Holly Hospice Volunteer Coordinator

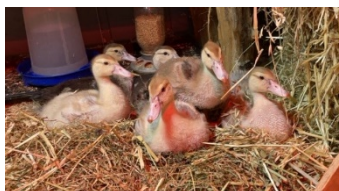
Hello Hospice Volunteers!

As fall seems to be coming and going in the blink of an eye, I am excited to see what the rest of the year has in store. This past month I have added 6 new baby ducks to my flock of chickens! They sure do grow like weeds it seems and it has been fun to see those changes every day. I also have a hen that has been sitting on eggs, so I am hopeful for some new baby chicks in the coming week!

I am pleased to announce we have 4 new volunteers who have started over the last few months. Siam, Jeff, Betty, and Taigan will be at the Hospice House in Wausau. Siam and Betty will also be homecare volunteers.

Thank you all for being an incredible asset to Aspirus and our hospice program!

Holly Aschbrenner
Holly.Aschbrenner@aspirus.org
715-581-0315

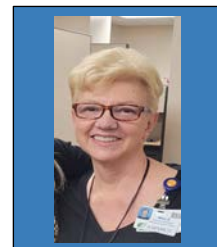


Update From Mary Volunteer Administrative Coordinator

Hello All – My name is Mary Dobeck. I am the new Volunteer Administrative Coordinator. A little background on me ... I began my employment with Aspirus in the year 2000 working in Human Resources as a Human Resources Representative. Then, in 2015, I began work as Executive Assistant for both the Volunteers and the Aspirus Health Foundation, so I already know some of you. Now, I've been fortunate enough to be able to continue my work with all of you and the Volunteers Department in my new role. I am immensely grateful to all of you who so generously give of your time and talents to support and strengthen our community. I look forward to getting to know more of you. If there's anything you need, I'm a good place to start.

To contact me, call the general Volunteers number at 715-847-2848, or email mary.dobeck@aspirus.org.

Happy Fall and Happy Volunteering!



Update From Susan Lifeline Coordinator

Lifeline installers held their first meeting since before COVID! This will be a regular meeting to discuss what is new in Lifeline, troubleshooting issues, and meeting with our newest volunteers/veteran installers.

If you or someone you know is in need of Lifeline in Marathon County, please call Aspirus Lifeline at 715-847-2781; outside of Marathon County, call Aspirus Health Lifeline at 1-800-533-8954, X 54592.

Susan Prah, Lifeline Coordinator
Aspirus Wausau Hospital
Susan.Prah@Aspirus.org
715-847-2781



Pictured: Paul Dobbratz, Kitty Switlick and Curtis Barthel

Thank a Veteran on November 11th

We would like to recognize all the veterans out there, especially our volunteers who have served for our country. Thank you for everything you have done.



Update From Kitty

Community Health Education for Partners of WHA North Central District

'Tripledemic'. I had never heard the word before a couple weeks ago. It references the three respiratory viruses that are all occurring at the same time: Covid 19, Influenza (flu), and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). The flu and RSV are not new viruses and are generally present in the winter months. While there is an annual vaccine against the flu, there is no vaccine for RSV. All three viruses are extremely contagious and share some of the same symptoms including cough, runny nose and fever. All three of them can affect all ages and RSV can be especially serious for infants with small airways and elderly adults.

When Covid 19 was first identified and found to be extremely contagious and lethal, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) identified best practices to decrease the spread. Schools were closed, the use of masks was strongly encouraged, and travel and all socialization was discouraged. Good handwashing was promoted along with the use of alcohol disinfectants. While cases of Covid 19 continued to be reported, the CDC noticed a decrease in the number of flu and RSV cases being reported. This was attributed to the fact that the precautions taken to decrease Covid 19 also worked to decrease the incidence of the flu and RSV.

With the advent of Covid 19 vaccines and boosters, many of the Covid restrictions were removed. Kids have been back in school, people are once again traveling and socializing, and the use of masks for the general public is no longer mandated except in certain environments. While Covid 19 cases continue to be diagnosed, they are less severe than prior to the vaccines. What health experts are now concerned with is the increase in flu and RSV cases being reported. Cases are showing up in higher numbers and much earlier than usual. RSV is affecting children especially hard resulting in a higher incidence of inpatient admissions.

While it is important to take care of yourself, it is equally important to take care of each other. When fewer people get sick, everyone's risk goes down. We can decrease the risk of infections by continuing to do the following:

- Stay home when sick.
- If you don't feel well and must go out, wear a mask.
- Cover your cough and sneezes.
- Wash hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Get the flu vaccine early and annually.
- Get the Covid vaccine and available boosters.

I wish you all good health. Be smart and stay informed. Knowledge is power!

Kitty Switlick
Community Health Education

Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc. (Partners) is a non-profit, volunteer service organization affiliated with the Wisconsin Hospital Association. Founded in 1951 as Wisconsin Hospital Association Auxiliaries, Partners, which changed its name in 1997, now boasts almost 9,000 members in Wisconsin.

- *Partners emphasizes volunteer participation in health education, health career and wellness programs, and volunteer service to Wisconsin hospitals, focusing on public policy education and advocacy to Wisconsin hospitals.*
- *Promote and provide leadership development resources and opportunities for its members.*
- *Partners shares information on successful volunteer programs, fund raising and trends in volunteerism through its quarterly newsletter, Reaching Out, and through legislative and health education mailings.*



Pictured: Romona Hornisher, Sherry Schaefer, Ann Wicklund, Yo Voigt, Bonnie Koelsch, Nettie Sosnowski, Jan Molaska, Kitty Switlick, and Lyn Krohn.

Aspius Volunteers Recognized

On October 11th, the Aspius Wausau Hospital Volunteers were recognized by the Wisconsin Awards for Volunteer Excellence (WAVE) program for their involvement with the Rainbow's End Camp at their annual convention in the Wisconsin Dells.

The camp is a summer day camp for children ages 5-21. The camp provides children with physical, cognitive and/or emotional challenges the opportunity to interact with their peers in a safe and competition-free environment.

Rainbows End Camp Summer 2023

For more than 35 years, Rainbow's End has given children with special needs throughout north central Wisconsin a week-long summer camp experience. Rainbow's End encourages creativity and enhances the self-confidence of these children. The camp gives children the opportunity to enjoy safe, creative and fun activities in a beautiful outdoor setting. Our camp programs are individualized for each camper based upon his or her abilities, strengths, and potential.

The camp relies heavily on volunteers who work one-on-one with these children so that they can participate to the fullest degree in camp activities.

Sponsored in part by Aspius Health Foundation and a host of community organizations and individuals, Rainbow's End makes it possible for more than 50 children with special needs to enjoy swimming, fishing, crafts, games, songs and all the fun of a summer camp.

All of this would not be possible if it weren't for dedicated volunteers who help these children enjoy all the different camp activities. Volunteers must be 14 or older. Volunteer hours help on college applications and may qualify for scholarship. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering for the July 2023 sessions, please contact the Volunteers office.

To see the smiles, to hear the laughter, and to feel the friendships and love is to understand the treasure at the end of this rainbow.



Recruiting Fairs

The last few months we have been busy recruiting for more volunteers! Yo went to the Concert on the Square in August, Yo and Mary went to the Wausau West volunteer fair in early October, and Mary and Holly went to the United Way RSVP Volunteer Fair in late October. By participating in these events we were able to recruit 5+ new volunteers!



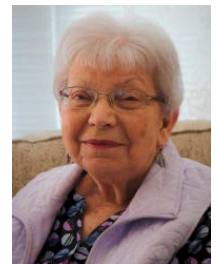
Aspirus Health Foundation

On August 1st, the Golf Classic was held at the Wausau Country Club. They were able to raise \$68,600 that will go towards helping kids build healthy brains through Aspirus Reach Out and Read program at 14 Aspirus Clinics, helping fund a new NICU Transporter, and continuing support of the Aspirus Family House.



In Memory of Evelyn Sommi (1936-2022)

Evelyn volunteered in many departments throughout the hospital and hospice for 12 years, including the Volunteers Department. She was a dear, sweet lady!



Festival of Trees 25th Anniversary

November 22 – 26, 2022

Central WI Convention & Expo Center, Rothschild

The Festival of Trees is a community fundraising event to support Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services and the Aspirus Family House.

Experience the magic of the Festival of Trees! Stroll through a glittering forest of over 100 holiday trees, wreaths, centerpieces, and a variety of unique specialty items decorated and donated by community members for raffle and silent auction. Visit with Santa, enjoy a complimentary cookie and beverage, and listen to local musicians – all with your ticket purchase.

It's a wonderful way to get in the holiday spirit and get away from the hustle and bustle while helping others. Proceeds from the Festival will be used to support people in our community who need help during their end-of-life journeys, as well as those traveling for specialty care or a medical crisis.

We hope to see you there! Visit wausaufestivaloftrees.org for more details or to volunteer.

NOVEMBER 23 - 26

**CENTRAL WI CONVENTION +
EXPO CENTER, ROTHSCHILD**

We invite you to stroll through a glittering forest of over 100 trees, wreaths, mantels, holiday décor, baskets and specialty items decorated and donated by individuals, families, organizations and businesses for our progressive silent auction and raffle.



DAILY VIEWING

Wed., Nov. 23 Noon - 5 pm
Senior Stroll (\$4)..... 9 am - Noon
Thurs., Nov. 24 1 pm - 5 pm
Fri., Nov. 25 9am - 5pm
Sat., Nov 26 11am - 5pm

\$5 per person. Children two and under are free.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Opening Night Gala
Tues., Nov. 22, 6 - 9 pm

Teddy Bear Blast
Fri., Nov. 25, 5:30 - 7 pm
Sat. Nov. 26, 9 - 10:30 am

Visit with Santa and take your own picture (check schedule online).



PRESENTING SPONSOR



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FESTIVAL SPONSORS

Associated Bank, BMO Harris Bank, CoVantage Credit Union, Delta Dental, ENT & Allergy Associates, Greenfire Management Services, Mullins Cheese, Orthopaedic Associates of Wausau, REI Engineering, Security Health Plan, STIFEL The Lang-Koss Wealth Mgt. Team, Surgical Associates/Eleve'



For more information contact the Aspirus Health Foundation 715.847.2470.
wausaufestivaloftrees.org



Update From Sammie Coffee and Gift Shop Supervisor

Gift Shop: The mini gift shop is staying busy at the coffee shop. Sales are averaging \$100 to \$300 a day! With one day at \$608!

Construction is officially beginning the week of Nov. 7 in the big gift shop! We are anxious to get into the newly remodeled area in time for Christmas; more updates coming soon as construction moves along.

I am working on the volunteer schedule starting for January – looking to fill afternoon shifts. Shifts are Mon-Fri 1-3pm & 3pm-5pm. If this need interests you, please let me know. Training is easy!

Coffee Shop: Business is booming! We will be starting our holiday drinks the week of Nov. 7; these include a Holiday blend freshly brewed coffee, Peppermint Mocha, Toasted White Chocolate Mocha, to name a few!

An offer has been made for a .8 FTE (32 hours week) barista; if accepted, this will allow the coffee shop to be open 6:30am-5pm. We still have a .4 FTE position available (16 hours a week). Once the mini gift shop is out of the coffee shop, we will be bringing back the seating area there.

We are looking for volunteers who would be willing to volunteer at our coffee shop on Monday afternoons, Wednesday mornings or afternoons, or Friday mornings or afternoons starting in December.

Sammie Giese
715-847-2739



Kristen Anderson
Volunteering at
the Coffee Shop.



Donna Rule training Mary
Ventzke in the mini Gift
Shop located in the
Coffee Shop.



Maddie and Sammie
working in the Coffee
Shop. Maddie has now
returned to finish her
senior year of high school.



Lois Jarosz worked with
Sammie to put together
gift baskets to be sold to
guests and staff online.

Many of you may have celebrated a birthday during the pandemic and received a birthday card with a Gift Shop coupon. Please know that when the Gift Shop remodel is done, those coupons will still be honored past the expiration date!

Happy Birthday to you all!



Gift

VALID UNTIL : 12/30/22

For the Aspirus Volunteers....

COUPON

30% off an item at the Aspirus Mini Gift Shop! Exclusions include: Ampersand Sweatshirts, Cards, Candy, Balloons, flowers, stamps, and sale merchandise.

30%
OFF



Aspirus Family House Update

The Aspirus Family House is looking for volunteers to make meals/soups during the week (everyday but Wednesday night). The only request is the volunteer bring the ingredients and make it at the House. This has been a big hit at the House for families to grab a warm meal after visiting loved ones in the hospital. If you have questions or wish to sign up, please call the Family House at 715-847-2548.

In addition, as you can imagine, keeping the Family House stocked with basic necessities requires a lot of donated supplies and support from the community. Right now, there is a need for toilet paper, hand soap, Lysol spray disinfectant, individual snacks, and coffee K-cups for the Keurig machine.

**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

What a busy summer/fall it has been at both houses! Here are some updates since last time:

Aspirus Hospice House: We are excited to share there is new outdoor furniture on the porch as you walk in. This has been in the works all summer to replace the old white furniture. Soon there will be a new table with chairs in the back patio as well. The garage will be getting new overhead doors later this month and we are hoping for new floors throughout the halls and rooms within the next two months.

Thank you to everyone who has helped with suppers, dusting, preparing meals, and visiting with patients. Your help has truly been appreciated! As always you can go visit with patients at any time to chat, take them outside, or play a game.



The Aspirus Seasons of Life House located in Woodruff has a new dedicated memorial tree outside the front that families are able to, and encouraged to write a loved one's name on and attach to the tree. The local newspaper was there while this memorial event took place.

Chris from the House would like help with the next two holidays if anyone is willing to serve Thanksgiving and/or Christmas meals. Thank you all for helping around the house!

Pictured here are just two of the many beautiful bucks that frequent the house in the backyard.



Thank you Knitters/Quilters!

A very heartfelt thank you to all the Volunteer Knitters/Quilters/Crocheters/Sewers and our community! The Aspirus Birthing Center, NICU, Palliative Care Unit, and Hospice departments appreciate the time and talent that goes into making caps, booties, critters, prayer shawls, and blankets. For new 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!



Maureen Cotter and Denise Visconte - PACARs



Patty Sowinski helping at the Heart Waiting Room



Tracie Barthel visiting patients with the Comfort Cart.



Abdullah Darduk helping in Heart Waiting



Cuddler Training: Shannon Norman, Alison Acridge, Chari Schalow, Nicole Van der Sanden, Tracie Barthel, and Marta Stephenson pictured with the trainers.

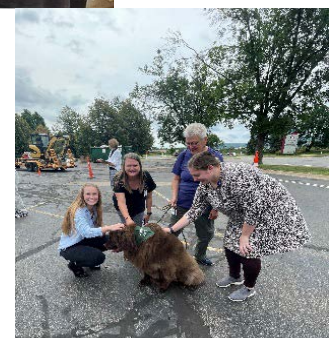
Patty Koehler with Project Search students and dog Arthur.



Emily Voss with dog, Whisper visiting with a Med student shadow.



Pet Therapy Group and their first appearance at the Aspirus Farmers Market. (Left: Eileen Guthrie with Maggie, Patty Koehler with Arthur, Emily Voss with Whisper, and Craig Lefebvre with Finley).



Volunteer Needs

If you have completed your return packet and given proof of vaccine, please consider helping with the following needs:

Aspirus Wausau Hospital:

Food Service: Tuesday-Friday 11am-1:30pm

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

Coffee Shop (HIGH NEED): Monday-Friday (ages 14+) 8:30am-12:30pm

Cancer Center: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 12-4pm, Fridays 8am-12pm & 12-4pm

EZ Rider: Mondays & Fridays 12-4pm, Tuesdays and Fridays 8am-12pm (*Some restrictions may apply)

Day Surgery Waiting Room* (HIGH NEED): Wednesdays & Thursdays 8am-12pm & 12-4pm, and

Monday-Friday 4-6pm *Waiting room opportunities serve as the liaison for families waiting for surgery.

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

Organizational Learning: Every Tuesday 9:30-11:30am

Rainbow's End: It's not too early to start thinking about volunteering at Rainbow's End day camp for children with special needs. It will be held the weeks of July 17, 2023 and July 24, 2023. If you, or if you know of someone who might be interested, please contact Mary at 715-847-2848.

Hospice House - Wausau:

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

And, visiting with patients at any time is welcome.

Seasons Of Life - Woodruff:

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

Aspirus Family House (HIGH NEED):

Mondays 12:00-2:00pm, 4-6pm, Tuesdays 12-2pm, 4-6pm, Wednesdays 12-2pm, 4-6pm,

Thursdays 12-2pm, 4-6pm, Fridays 12-2:00pm, 4-6pm, Saturday and Sunday 9:30-11:30am, 2-4pm.

Bring in items to make meals/soup at the Family House during the week.

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.

There will be a Vigil Volunteer training coming soon. If interested, contact Holly.



All volunteers, please continue to wear your masks while volunteering!



BE WELL from your Volunteers staff!

Yo at 715-847-2846,

Mary at 715-847-2848, and

Holly at 715-581-0315.

