



# Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

## 2021 MAHV-elous Awards for Outstanding Volunteers

Throughout 2021, MAHV was pleased to recognize 51 volunteers from around the state as recipients of the MAHV-elous Award for Outstanding Volunteers. Read their stories below.

### District A

#### Benedictine Living Community (Crookston) – February 2021

**Diane Seddon**: As Auxiliary president and volunteer, Diane serves on many boards and committees within the facility, notably helping with the large task of outdoor holiday lighting for room-bound residents to enjoy. As part of hosting a *virtual* LIGHT UP A LIFE fundraiser, she was on local radio promoting this year's creative new approach to the facility's largest annual fundraiser. Diane has been a rock star when it comes to "what *can* we do? vs what we *can't* do" during the pandemic.

**Marie Chaput**: Marie serves as the auxiliary accountant. COVID meant stopping indoor auxiliary meetings, but she never missed the outdoor, socially-distanced meetings that were held and calls to check in on what can be done to promote staff satisfaction during this time. Her creativity and support resulted in tee-shirts and treats for staff as well as bath aids to help make residents' bath day more of a spa experience. She is a phone call away, helping out when she can - with whatever she can- while still making deposits and keeping in close contact with the board.

#### CHI St. Joseph's Health (Park Rapids) – March 2021

**Anna Hudson**: serves as Auxiliary Secretary, taking extremely careful, detailed minutes of the meetings. Even before the pandemic, Anna stayed in close contact with hospital personnel to keep auxiliaries aware of hospital procedures and happenings. In 2019, she chaired our largest fundraiser, The Festival of Tables and played a pivotal role at the annual "Sweets, Treats, and Treasures" Cookie Walk fundraiser. Anna has made hundreds of masks during the pandemic, being one of the first to suggest and make them, and she hasn't stopped yet! Anna is a terrific sewer and jumped on a suggestion from a July District A and C virtual meeting to make *Busy Bags* to occupy children who accompany parents to the hospital. She initiated contact with the person



<https://www.facebook.com/HCAMN/>

<https://www.mahv.org>



## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

who made the suggestion and ended up making these bags from recovered material from hospital gowns that would have been thrown away. Anna is thoroughly invested in all auxiliary's projects and "should be commended for her hard work!"



**Jean Ruzicka:** is the current past president of the auxiliary. Members of the auxiliary were excited when a newly-retired Jean joined the group, since she was well known as community news reporter for the *Park Rapids Enterprise*. Jean became president in 2018 during a transition of volunteer coordinators and successfully weathered a presidency with little guidance. She oversaw all fundraising events and, most notably, created a special section of the newspaper - at no cost to the auxiliary - for a new fundraiser the 'Garden Stroll' in July, 2019. Because the community viewed this beautiful pictorial spread with articles about the gardeners beforehand, the fundraiser was a huge success. Unable to hold one of biggest fundraisers "Sweets, Treats, and Treasures" Cookie Walk in 2020 due to the pandemic, a "No Bake, Bake Sale" took its place. Jean was called upon to create another special newspaper section with tried-and-true recipes from auxiliaries, including lovely family stories about the auxiliaries and pictures. Jean is "commended for her ability to work with the newspaper, who gave the auxiliary free press, her attention to detail for this tremendous undertaking, and for bringing CHI St. Joseph's Health important volunteerism to Hubbard County's consciousness!" (She also made many masks for our community during the pandemic.)

### CHI St. Joseph's Health (Park Rapids) – April 2021

**Peggy Morrow:** is a dedicated and conscientious member of auxiliary, who quietly volunteers and can be counted on to help carry out projects. Noted for being reliable and supporting all auxiliary functions, she most recently made and donated 2,000 masks the health care facility. Peggy is the definition of 'steadfast' in her service and commitment.





## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

### CHI St. Joseph's Health (Park Rapids) – May 2021

**Carol Luukkonen:** At auxiliary functions, Carol greets everyone with a great big infectious smile and contributes to all projects. She has served as the auxiliary president, and for several years as secretary. Recently, she has made over 1,500 masks to our health care facility and is still working on producing more masks to help fill the need. Carol is a “dedicated, enthusiastic, and hardworking member, truly a MAHV-elous volunteer.”



**Carol Machovsky:** Carol is a dedicated volunteer to both the hospital auxiliary and the state association (MAHV and its predecessor HCAM). She is kind, supportive, organized and full of ideas to support the work of the auxiliary. She has served in offices at local, district and state levels. Carol always has a smile and is willing to help new auxiliary members and is a great problem solver. She excels at recruiting for volunteer jobs by choosing people that have the particular interests and skills. When with Carol, her humor and easy-going personality makes for a wonderful experience, even when faced with difficulties. It's no surprise that she is viewed as a core member of the auxiliary.

The hospital foundation's golf event is a major fundraiser. \$10 raffle tickets to win cash prizes are a big part of the event. Carol made a mission of selling tickets, going person-to-person and business-to-business. Amazingly, she sold 22 books of tickets. At \$10.00 a ticket (10 tickets per book) she brought in \$2,200.00 for the foundation event. That's a big WOW! Carol always gives 100% to everything she does. She certainly excels in everything in which she becomes involved. We are so very lucky to have her as an Auxilian, a hospital volunteer, and a part of our community.



## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

### CHI St. Joseph's Health (Park Rapids) – July/August 2021

**Linda Paulsen** is always eager and ready to assist in any way she can. The gift shop has a new register system. Unfortunately, the software did not have an instruction guide. Linda came in every day for two weeks to work with our Gift Shop Coordinator to create a detailed instruction guide. Her assistance along with her always cheerful attitude made the task both easier and much more enjoyable.



Once upon a time, **Theora Goodrich** wandered into CHI St. Joseph's Health Services gift shop, where she chatted with the volunteer who was working in the shop that day. The volunteer convinced Theora to become a gift shop volunteer ... and the rest is history. It didn't take long for her generous spirit and outstanding leadership skills to shine. She soon became President of the CHI St. Joseph's Health Auxiliary for several terms.

She encourages volunteers to step up and take on projects; she supports and inspires success as activities progress. Theora is always pleasant, upbeat, and positive. Above all, she is unwaveringly committed to the mission of CHI St. Joseph's Health and the Auxiliary.

Theora currently serves as the District A Chair and brings innovation to the process of increasing leadership skills within district. During the pandemic, she coordinated Zoom meetings and webinars to teach us ways to be resilient and helps us stay connected with each other virtually. She inspires all to be better leaders and to take care of ourselves while caring for others.

### CHI St. Joseph's Health (Park Rapids) – September 2021

**Sharon Meyer** is described as the Energizer Bunny- it seems like she is always volunteering in some aspect of the hospital's mission. She has been a Hospital Volunteer for a number of years working at the Information Desk near the ACU/Same Day Surgery Center. Sharon is also a member of the Auxiliary's leadership team, serving first as Co-President, Co-Past President and is currently the Auxiliary Treasurer. In addition, Sharon volunteers for the Foundation's



<https://www.facebook.com/HCAMN/>

<https://www.mahv.org>



## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

fundraisers and events. While the pandemic slowed her down a little, Sharon was one of the first volunteers back on the job by assisting at the Community Health's COVID-19 vaccination clinics. Sharon always has a smile on her face and is so generous with her time and talents.

### **CHI St. Joseph's Health (Park Rapids) – November/December 2021**

**Kathy Thompson** can be counted on to come up with creative ideas to keep the Auxiliary moving forward. Remember the old saying, "there's not a creative bone in my body?" Well, it's safe to say every bone in Kathy's body is creative.

She is a champion for fun with team building ideas that strengthen communication and friendship among members. She has a wealth of networking ideas, whether it's activities at our group gatherings or on a road trip. *She brings members together.*



As President of Auxiliary Group 2, Kathy would ask, "does anyone have an idea for?" ...then, wait for a response - hearing none - would say with a smile on her face, "I have one!" Soon her enthusiasm would have the whole group rallying around her idea, working to make it happen. She is a true leader, progressive thinker and always volunteering to help. She takes that extra step to start a project or activity, whatever it may be.

Kathy plays a major role in the Auxiliary by securing grants to help defray expenses of major fundraisers, boosting the amount of profit for our organization. She also mentors other members and encourages them to apply for grants to help the Auxiliary as a whole.



**June Goetzke:** Ready and willing to say "I can do that," June volunteers in countless Auxiliary roles and functions. She is often the first to volunteer, and her presence is valued at every Auxiliary function. June is kind and helps new members feel comfortable and part of the group

She is a proud Auxiliary member and loves to share the history of the organization. She has captured many activities, fund raisers and conferences, creating a historical account for future Auxilians. She records members in local, district and statewide leaderships positions.

Her introduction to the state board of MAHV was while working on history for the hospital. Carol Machovsky, MAHV (then, HCAM) President in 2016, asked June if she would organize several boxes of old records by district and put them into albums. She said "why not?" and was sworn in at the next state board meeting as the Historian. The following year June travelled to

<https://www.facebook.com/HCAMN/>

<https://www.mahv.org>



## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

the Spring and Fall District Forums displaying the albums. All the healthcare volunteers seemed to enjoy looking at pictures of their events. For her contributions, June received the 2016 President's Award.



**Kay Smythe**, an Auxiliary member for over 50 years, is always ready and willing to help on any project. In the early years of the Auxiliary, she helped organize meetings which were held in members' homes.

Kay has held every position on the Executive Committee and in her group, at least twice. She is the photographer for all of the Auxiliary events, enough pictures to make a book! Kay has served on the MAHV state board as well.

Most recently during the pandemic, Kay invited members to her home to participate in the virtual MAHV regional conference and District A Fall Forum. Her hospitality and generosity allowed members to work together, network and brainstorm future ideas for the local organization.

Though soft spoken, Kay is recognized a servant leader and dedicated volunteer.

### District B

#### Community Memorial Hospital (CMH) (Cloquet) – February 2021

**Don Unulock**: has been associated with the Occupational Therapy (OT) department for many years. He was a key member of a Stroke Support Group and was generous in sharing his personal experiences through his rehab journey. He became so committed to the department that he sought out volunteer opportunities, and has been a consistent and dedicated volunteer each week in the OT/Speech 'family' since 2010. He helps manage so many of the miscellaneous tasks including copying, filing, and helping therapists with projects. During this COVID-19 pandemic, the need for sanitization that has consumed more of the therapist's time. Now that volunteers are able to return, Don helps offset that load by sanitizing therapy equipment and toys. He values our services and is willing to do anything we need, allowing staff to focus on patient care and documentation. The department feels "fortunate that Don chooses to volunteer with us. He is our friend and an important part of our team."





## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

### **Community Memorial Hospital (CMH) (Cloquet) – March 2021**

**Rosemary Tobin:** Since retiring from nursing home administration and chaplaincy, Rosemary has volunteered at the front desk and gift shop. She is also involved in the Lights of Love Commemoration event as well as many other community events. She has been steadfast in her service: She has been in her front desk volunteer position for a long time and shares a wealth of knowledge. She is a 'go to' volunteer for helping to train new front desk volunteers. The volunteer coordinator said: "When she gave a tour of the hospital to the new volunteer, I even learned something. Rosemary is amazing!"



**Marie Schneider:** As a front desk volunteer, Marie went above and beyond one day for a visitor, who was at the hospital to see a dying relative. Marie walked with and comforted the visitor and made sure the visitor got to where she needed to go. Marie made such an impact during this visit, that a family member later called to ask for Marie's address to send her a thank you card. Although, she would probably say she was just being helpful, Marie is an awesome example of volunteers who make a difference, every encounter, every day.

### **Community Memorial Hospital (CMH)(Cloquet) – April 2021**

**Barb DeLovely:** goes above and beyond AND is steadfast in service. She is the Volunteer Service Organization (VSO) treasurer and sits on the Leadership Board. You can count on Barb to raise her hand to help out with most events and fundraisers. In fact, looking over the calendar of yearly events, projects, committees and fundraisers, there are only count two things she was not involved in. "Barb does not seek the limelight but is always there to help our organization be successful."

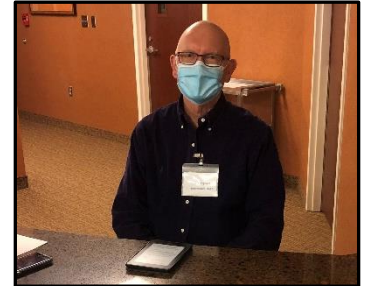




## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

### Community Memorial Hospital (CMH) (Cloquet) – May 2021

**Larry Penk** has been volunteering like crazy lately. The hospital asked for volunteers each week to help as patients arrive for vaccinations: answering patient questions, directing them where to go and even helping them fill out paper work if they are unable too. The staff appreciates that Larry comes in and helps in every way possible, and they notice when he's not there. When the vaccine schedule for the week is emailed, Larry is certain to sign up for at least one, if not two, time slots. He really enjoys helping the patients and is a calm presence when those coming in may be anxious about their first shot. On top of taking on extra volunteer hours each week, Larry also works the front desk once a week. He is a welcoming face to those coming into the hospital.



**Darlene Carter** is the manager of the Apple Cart gift shop and has been for many years. Darlene typically puts in 10 hours a week volunteering at the gift shop, ordering items and rearranging the gift shop to make it as eye catching as she can for customers. Once the gift shop was re-opened this summer, Darlene would come in on Saturdays or Sundays when it was closed to work on getting displays up and ready for the week. She is extremely dedicated and hard working. Employees look forward to seeing what new items she puts out each week.

### District C

### Stevens Community Medical Center (SCMC) (Morris) – March 2021



**Linda Knutson**: works full-time at SCMC, but takes her volunteering above and beyond. She is an advocate for the volunteers and is always willing to help in the gift shop and with special projects. During the pandemic, the gift shop was relocated and closed to the public. She recognized how important it was for staff to have time to take a well-deserved break and shop, so she volunteers her time nearly every Thursday for 2-3 hours so staff can shop. Her dedication and out-of-the-box thinking has allowed the SCMC Ambassadors to continue donating gift shop proceeds to benefit the health and wellness of patients. "We think Linda is a MAHV-elous volunteer!"





## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

### Stevens Community Medical Center (SCMC) (Morris) – March 2021

**Maria Marty:** Maria is a dedicated volunteer and serves as the treasurer of the SCMC Ambassadors. She regularly volunteers for special events and projects as well as coming in each month for deposits. When the gift shop was shut down due to the pandemic, a way was found to open safely for staff. Maria continues to come in to price, stage, and work the store so staff could take a well-deserved break to shop, and she volunteers ongoing support for special projects like packaging employee appreciation gifts. Her contributions to the gift shop have allowed the Ambassadors to continue fulfilling donation requests during the pandemic. “We think Maria is a MAHV-elous volunteer!”



### District D

#### CHI St. Gabriel’s Health (Little Falls) – January 2021

**Patti Foss:** Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, Patti has been volunteering twice a week. Initially a “hospital screener” every Tuesday morning, she frequently added the afternoon shift as well, working back-to-back shifts on her Tuesdays. Now Patti, a former RN, drives for a clinic run on Mondays and serves as an early morning Same Day Services volunteer on Tuesdays. “CHI St. Gabriel’s is blessed to have Patti’s dedication and flexibility to meet our patients’ needs.”



**Doug Richter:** Doug does “screenings” for anyone coming into the front doors. His role involves temperature checks and asking standard questions about COVID19 symptoms and exposure. He does this *every* weekday afternoon. He is friendly, kind and always on time, providing exceptional support to staff during the pandemic.



## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

**Dawn Buehner:** One of the first people to call the volunteer department after the initial shut-down of surgeries last March, she offered to help out wherever needed. Having a variety of volunteer experiences prior to the coronavirus outbreak made her a real asset. By June, she was able to help out at least once a week – sometimes twice - in “non-patient” volunteer areas which were approved for volunteer involvement: first, as a screener, and then in Same Day Services, Cafeteria and Gift Shop. Dawn is responsible, caring and concerned for other’s well-being.



**Cynthia Marriott:** She also jumped in as a “hospital screener,” serving every Friday until screeners became paid positions. Cynthia now volunteers in the Same Day Service area every week and is dedicated to keeping that weekly schedule going. Cynthia is exceptional at making sure people understand and adhere to the COVID19 policies and procedures while maintaining a friendly atmosphere.

**Linda LeBlanc:** As president of the CHI St. Gabriel’s Hospital Advocates, she has been mindful of keeping the Advocate board members informed about what’s happening at the hospital. Creative in seeking new ways to fund raise through on-line sales and a “bakeless” bake sale, she keeps a keen eye out for unique fund-raising opportunities - most recently, a local grocery store coupon book sale that became a quick \$1,500 profit for the advocate board. “CHI St. Gabriel’s is grateful for her commitment to increasing membership as well as her creative and energetic efforts serving as the advocate president.”



**Mike Gass:** When the COVID19 pandemic began, Mike called to say he was available to help out in whatever way needed. When volunteers were allowed to return, the first need was for volunteer “screeners.” He readily accepted the challenge and volunteered weekly. As “non-patient care” areas opened up, he resumed his prior roles, dependably serving two days a week as a storeroom volunteer delivering department supplies, and as a facilities support volunteer, where he assists with utility billing, compliance documents and analysis of energy data. His prior career as a mathematics professor brought an invaluable service to our hospital as he has generously shared his professional experience.

<https://www.facebook.com/HCAMN/>

<https://www.mahv.org>



## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

**Darla Giles:** After the initial shut down, Darla, “lead” gift shop manager, kept a listening ear for if and when the gift shop could re-open. She received the go-ahead in October and spearheaded the switch out of inventory as well as redecorating efforts, working late in the day and on weekends. In addition to ensuring compliance with the new safety standards, she also notified and scheduled returning volunteers. Darla is passionate about this work and often states, "what great volunteers there are in the gift shop."



### **M Health Fairview Lakes Medical Center (Wyoming) – February 2021**

**Gay Gronlund:** has been a volunteer for seven years. Normally, she serves in the gift shop, but because it's still closed due to COVID-19, she jumped at the chance to take on not one, not two, but *THREE* new roles. This fall she trained to be a volunteer at the main information desk. When the inpatient pharmacy needed help doing monthly checks for expired medications, she was the first volunteer to respond and added that to her plate. Most recently, she also volunteered to help with administration duties surrounding employee COVID-19 vaccinations. Gay is quickly becoming a Jack - “Jill” - of all Trades!



### **M Health Fairview Lakes Medical Center (Wyoming) – March 2021**

**Trudi Blake** has volunteered for nearly five years, serving in both the gift shop and the infusion clinic. Last fall, we were able to bring volunteers back to select positions including the infusion clinic: Trudi didn't hesitate but jumped right into her volunteer role. She is always willing to help with other projects, saying YES to helping with administrative duties surrounding the huge task of getting our staff the COVID vaccine. “The hospital is a better place because of Trudi!”





## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers



**Mary Ann Cooper:** has been volunteering for over nine years, including several years in leadership positions on the volunteer organization board. Most recently, she stepped up to answer the call for volunteers to help in the infusion clinic, one of the select positions re-opening for volunteers last fall. This was a new role for Mary Ann, a retired nurse, and, knowing what a special assignment it is for supporting patients, families and staff, she was nervous about doing it. It's a good match for her talents and she is succeeding with flying colors. She, too, is always willing to help with other projects, including administrative duties surrounding employee COVID vaccinations. She has been steadfast in her service and commitment to Lakes.

**John Kirby:** has been a volunteer for nine years, mainly in the infusion clinic but also as a volunteer parking valet. Pre-COVID, John was a 'first call' volunteer for open valet shifts, and he was almost always able to help us on short notice for this important service for patients and visitors. It was no surprise, then, that he was quick to respond to our call for help this fall when we could bring volunteers back, picking up many extra open shifts in the infusion clinic over the last few months.



**Karen Langeland:** and her therapy dog Mike first came to volunteer over four years ago. They quickly settled in to the therapy dog role and were a popular team at the hospital. When there was an urgent need for additional valet volunteers, Karen jumped in to help out with what was supposed to be a temporary role, but soon was a regular part of the valet team (and one of three women in that role). Both valet duties and therapy dog visits were stopped during the pandemic. This fall Karen was eager to get back to a volunteer role at the hospital even if it meant Mike had to stay home [he's not happy about that as the hospital is one of his favorite places]. Karen said YES to volunteering in the infusion clinic and has been "such a blessing" to the nurses in that department. Karen, like other early 'returnees', also said YES to helping with administration duties surrounding employee COVID vaccinations.



## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

**Mike McGee:** been a dedicated volunteer for seven years, serving in the Same Day Surgery family waiting area and donor check in for Red Cross Blood Drives. In pre-COVID times, he was always willing to pick up extra shifts in those assignments. When volunteers were able to return last fall, Mike graciously said he would help in the infusion clinic, a completely new role for him. Because of his willingness to learn a new role, he lifted some of the extra burden for the nurses in the infusion clinic as well as the staff in the pharmacy, who make the medications he delivers.



**Kathy Poff:** Prior to COVID, Kathy was part of the volunteer team at the information desk for three years, always with a smile and a YES for helping with extra projects. Once the call went out this fall for help in the infusion clinic, Kathy was one of the first to respond and eager to be trained on something new. She said YES again to assist with the administration duties surrounding the employee COVID vaccinations, a project that wouldn't be possible without volunteers like Kathy.

### **M Health Fairview Lakes Medical Center (M Health FLMC) (Wyoming) – April 2021**

**Ethel Hudon:** has been with M Health FLMC since BEFORE it was actually open. She's volunteered for more than 21 years and has logged more than 15,000 hours. Ethel is a staple at this building, and staff were so excited when they saw Ethel back in the building this past fall. They said: "This is starting to feel normal now" and "I'm re-energized because I see Ethel is back and it's giving me hope that things are going to get better." She is always willing to do whatever is needed, prompting the volunteer coordinator to "joke with her that she is never allowed to retire from volunteering!" Ethel is a past recipient of MAHV Heart of Minnesota Volunteer of the Year.





## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers



**Casey King:** A volunteer for just over a year, Casey has truly had a positive impact on the main information desk volunteer team. She quickly learned her volunteer duties and showed herself to be a person who can work with all types of personalities. She always asks if there are projects she can help with while on duty at the desk and didn't hesitate to return when volunteers could come back this past fall. She quickly jumped back into her role at the information desk, and most recently answered the call to help with administrative duties surrounding

employee COVID vaccinations.

**Kim Schmidt:** Pre-COVID, Kim, a hospital volunteer with 16 years of service, would work a full eight-hour shift each week, splitting her time between the main and ER information desks. Once COVID hit and volunteers were removed from the building, she immediately started making masks for the hospital. She has faithfully donated them every month and, to date, has made over 4,000 masks for the hospital, which are shared with staff, patients and families as well as other members of the community who are in need. "Kim found her way of continuing to make a difference during the pandemic



### MHealth Fairview Lakes (Wyoming) – May 2021



**Anne Renaker:** One of our newest volunteers yet no stranger to the building, Anne is a recent retiree from the nursing leadership team. Anne has been such a blessing this year. Not only does she have a medical background that is tremendously helpful, she also has the willingness to serve. Because of her commitment to service, a new volunteer position has been created just for her. She will be helping hospital departments with quality and safety tracers that will assist with regulatory compliance requirements. Anne also stepped up to

help with the administration tasks for employee COVID vaccinations.



## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

**Donna Keacher**: has been at Lakes for nearly 11 years, serving most of that time at the main information desk. When volunteers were able to safely return on site this fall and the call went out for help, Donna didn't hesitate and came back to her volunteer position. It has been very helpful to have a seasoned volunteer back in that role who knows the ropes. "We rest easy knowing the patients and families are being taken care of by Donna."



**Bob Weir**: A volunteer for nearly eight years, Bob is one who does double duties. Pre-pandemic, he served weekly as a volunteer valet and picked up an additional role at the main information desk. While COVID paused all the volunteer roles for several months, Bob was one who stepped up to the plate and returned to the information desk as soon as volunteers could resume their duties. Having an experienced volunteer in this role who knows his way around the hospital was a real bonus for patients and families and an anchor for the information desk team as volunteer roles were re-established.

### **Welia Health (Mora) – February 2021**

**Eunice Weckwerth**: serves as volunteer manager of the Gift Shop. In this role, she has put in many hours to keep the gift shop well-stocked with merchandise and attractive, inviting displays. When the gift shop had to be closed because of COVID-19, she continued to manage the gift shop, even though she was not able to physically be in it! She made sure that perishable items, like candy and other food items, were taken care of by having them distributed to hospital departments for employees. Before Christmas, holiday merchandise that had been ordered before the pandemic was also given out to employees as a thank you for their dedicated service. Eunice was instrumental in making these things happen; even though she could not enter the facility, she continued to carry on her volunteer duties.



# Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

## District F

### **Olmsted Medical Center (OMC) (Rochester) – February 2021**

**Andrew and Ida Verna**: In March 2020, COVID-19 presented an urgent need for sewers to make cloth masks. An email to a few volunteer sewers in the OMC Caring Partners Volunteer program went viral, and over 250 people throughout Minnesota sewed and donated over 24,000 masks to Olmsted Medical Center. Though each one is a hero worthy of recognition, Andrew and Ida's story stands out. How they heard about the request is unclear, but since last March, they have sewn and donated over 5,500 cloth masks to OMC, nearly one-fourth of all of the donated masks, which are given out to patients and to staff to protect lives. Andrew and Ida make a good team: she sews and he cuts the material and elastic for the 200-800 masks they drop off each week. They don't ask when they can quit, they don't demand materials. They don't know who will get their masks, they just know that the masks are needed. Their dedication truly is "above and beyond."

### **Winona Health (Winona) – April 2021**

**Barb Pozanc**: Since the COVID pandemic began, Barb has always asked "how can I help?" She has served 'above and beyond' by organizing a walk-by-the-windows parade for residents; screening employees at a high-traffic entrance when the pandemic began; scheduling and training volunteers for the surgical waiting room. She implemented new shift times and duties for this service area, taking charge and meeting with staff to set "the new standards". Barb stepped up and took the role of the treasurer when the current treasurer could no longer serve, and she coordinated a free ice cream day for all employees.



Barb set-up a virtual Nutman candy sale. If customers wanted their goodies delivered to Winona Health to defray shipping costs, she hand-delivered each order. During the month of October, Barb was here to help sell tickets (over 4,100 tickets sold!) for the basket bonanza event that was held on campus.

Barb is a "go-to" volunteer because she truly enjoys helping with any task: she knows that by helping with that task, it benefits others. She wears her heart on her sleeve and has the gift to always make others feel welcomed and does so with a huge smile every time.

<https://www.facebook.com/HCAMN/>

<https://www.mahv.org>





## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

### Winona Health (Winona) – May 2021

**Bev Keiper:** What would Winona Health do without Bev? Since the COVID pandemic began, she was one of the first to say “I’m ready to come back and help however I can.” Bev can be found at the hospital information desk, screening, meeting and greeting all who enter and she provides training for new volunteers at this service area. She helped out with COVID screening at the employee entrance when the pandemic first hit.



Bev currently leads a small group of volunteers on a scanning project with the medical staff services department, saving Winona Health over \$12,000 if this project would have been outsourced. Bev also serves on the volunteer board of directors, co-chairs the annual Basket Bonanza fundraiser (with profits of \$4,100 last fall!) and assists with the Heartland Jewelry and Accessories sale. Bev is a community-wide volunteer and puts her full energy into helping others throughout the city of Winona.



How does a hospital gift shop function and survive to keep its doors open during a global pandemic? At the historic Gladys D. Miller Gift Shop at Winona Health, one of the answers to that question: **Mary Breza**. Mary had to rethink a lot of different processes in order for the gift shop to stay open – hours of operation, how much merchandise to purchase/not to purchase, will volunteers want to help? do we purchase holiday merchandise? what if we have no shoppers? Mary took all that into consideration. The result? The gift shop is open and doing well.

Mary’s many gift shop hours are spent on purchasing, inventory, pricing, bookkeeping, showcasing and all the other tasks associated with a retail business. She is a delight to have on the volunteer team. She always wears a smile and shares a warm ‘hello.’ Her can-do-attitude is noticeable and her work ethic is nothing less than extraordinary. She is a true gift to our shop!



# Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

## District G

### Maple Grove Hospital (Maple Grove) – February 2021

**Jim Kirchner:** has been instrumental in offering as much support as possible to the frontline staff, despite lower volunteer numbers during the pandemic. Since June 2020, Jim has been cross-trained in two additional units, has created updated task lists for three units, and has trained new volunteers on these units in the absence of the usual trainer/lead volunteer support. Jim has gone above and beyond in looking for open shifts in the volunteer schedule that he can fill so units are supported as consistently as possible. All of this to say, “Jim has served our organization above and beyond expectations, and has been steadfast in his service.”



**Pat Shatava:** is a retired employee who has been generous in giving not only of her time and talent, but also her knowledge of the organization, its physical layout and staff. Without Pat it would be impossible to distribute snacks and beverages to all areas of the hospital - on day and overnight shifts- as easily, consistently or as efficiently. She volunteered on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve to make sure staff working on these days felt supported and uplifted through community-donated snacks. And she does it all with a smile and a spirit of service. Pat has been uniquely instrumental (and *steadfast*) in supporting the Maple Grove Hospital staff.

### Maple Grove Hospital (Maple Grove) – November/December 2021

**Kathy Learst** began volunteering with Maple Grove Hospital in 2014. Since then, she has had multiple roles in different departments. Her most recent role deeply impacts our volunteer team, whether or not they are ready to return to volunteering on campus.

Kathy, a past nurse with management experience, is the editor of the weekly volunteer e-news. She takes information that the volunteer office forwards to her, uses a discerning eye to determine what would be of interest to volunteers, and then translates staff-focused text to “volunteer-speak.” During the pandemic, these gifts of her time and talent has been especially crucial in keeping hospital volunteers informed, feeling safe, and staying engaged. On average, Kathy spends two hours every week crafting the message that will be sent to volunteers, making a tangible impact on the volunteer team *as well as* the Volunteer Services staff.





## Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers



**Martha Skinner** is a longtime volunteer, starting in 2010. In addition to volunteering once a week in the NICU, Martha offered to help with a large project in the volunteer office. Over the past year Martha has given her time and talent 'above and beyond' for an additional three shifts per week to help the office transition from paper to digital volunteer files. The work has been tedious and time consuming; however, Martha has been passionate about bringing the volunteer program up to speed and utilizing volunteer database to its fullest capability for document storage.

With her help, 500 volunteer files - containing an average of 25 documents (some with multiple pages) – were uploaded. This project has not only made looking up volunteer documents easier and more efficient, it has also helped ensure every file is complete. Martha helped improve workflow and the volunteer office is better prepared for the next accreditation survey.

**Deb Hiestand:** Since the start of COVID, with many fewer volunteers on site, Deb has been the main volunteer trainer in the Post-Partum & Peds units of the Family Birth Center. This is a very popular area to volunteer, in the busiest Birth Center in the state of Minnesota! Not only are volunteers in capable and kind hands with Deb, but she goes 'above and beyond' in accommodating schedules, especially for high school volunteers. Deb is a thorough trainer who has been instrumental in a recent revamping of the training checklist, position description and task lists for this volunteer role.



With Deb's feedback, the volunteer office was able to ask relevant, astute questions of Family Birth Center leaders to ensure that volunteers have tasks that are meaningful and helpful. Always wearing a smile, Deb is a leader who has gone above and beyond in her training of new volunteers and review of assignment documents.

***Each volunteer received a commendation from MAHV and an Outstanding Volunteer lapel pin.***