



Minnesota Association of Healthcare Volunteers

MAHV-elous Awards for Outstanding Volunteers, 2021

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.

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!

All MAHV-elous Volunteers receive a commendation from MAHV and an Outstanding Volunteer lapel pin.