

# Volunteer Updates



Froedtert  
West Bend Hospital

|March/April 2022 Issue

## Director's Letter

I am excited to begin this message with some great news from our Well Wisher Gift Shop. Twice a year, after reviewing the gift shop's financial performance, a transfer of funds is made to the Partner Volunteers in support of the Annual Wish List awards and Partner Volunteer scholarships for high school students. I am excited to share that a transfer of \$38,000 has been completed. Truly great news since this time last year, the transfer was \$22,000. While I am the fortunate bearer of this great news, the credit definitely goes to the gift shop volunteers for their ability to return to pre-Covid hours Monday-Friday with half the number of volunteers. A big thank you to all of you, as well as our staff, who continue to shop and support the gift shop.



Another sign that things are looking up, the health network will shift its visitor status as of March 9. The hospital will move from our current restrictions to "usual" status which allows for two visitors at the same time in all of our care settings. Inpatients may have four visitors for the duration of their stay, with two being allowed in the room at the same time. Since guidelines are in place for visiting patients in isolation, we will also no longer differentiate visitation for patients with or suspected of COVID-19. Moving to this more open visitor status is appropriate given the current COVID-19 community positivity rates. Supporting the importance of visitation for our patients, adhering to infection prevention guidelines and being mindful of overall safety and security, we expect this "usual" visitor status to be part of our new normal moving forward.

With these updated visitor guidelines, Patient Ambassador volunteers in the hospital will return to delivering mail and gifts to patient rooms/alcoves along with assisting with wayfinding and transporting. With the vaccination requirements for volunteers, the masking and social distancing guidelines and enhanced infection prevention measures that have all been put into place, we are confident in your safety. Similar to pre-COVID, volunteers should not enter rooms with isolation signage. Please make sure to continue to practice proper hand hygiene in addition to wearing the required mask over both your nose and mouth.

A challenge we have had since volunteers returned to service last year has been with departments realizing you are back, particularly with the Patient Ambassador desk. In an effort for staff to recognize volunteers are available for transport, wayfinding, discharge, etc. we are looking to condense the hospital Patient Ambassador desk to two shifts; 6:30-10:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Our ambassador desks in both the hospital and health center have half the number of volunteers and, therefore, we have some days when there are no volunteers at the desks. Temporarily adjusting the length of time each day for the hospital desk, and providing volunteers from 6:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Monday through Friday will hopefully provide more consistency for departments in need of transporting support for them to remember to call the desk.

Patient Ambassador volunteers, please consider signing up for the first or second shifts previously outlined when sharing availability, as we continue to implement steps to get us back on track.

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A few more updates and reminders to share:

- All onsite volunteers need to have the white Emergency Medical Alert card behind their name badge. If you do not have the white card, a supply is located next to the Volgistics kiosk. Please make sure to pick one up on your next scheduled shift.
- A secure, locked volunteer drop box has been installed by the Volgistics kiosk. This can be used to return requested paperwork, vaccine verifications, annual education quizzes, etc., to Volunteer Services. The box will be checked on a weekly basis.
- Food and eating precautions are still in place for the hospital regarding potlucks and home-prepared food so we unfortunately will not be able to hold the spring Partner Volunteer bake sale in May.
- Wisconsin Hospital Association's Partner Volunteer Advocacy Day will take place on Wednesday, March 23 from 8:30-11:45 a.m. The event will be held virtually again this year and is a good opportunity to hear information and updates about health care in Wisconsin. Any and all are welcome since the meeting is virtual. For more information, or to register yourself, go to [https://www.wha.org/AboutWHA/CalendarofEvents/Conference/AD-2022-\(1\)](https://www.wha.org/AboutWHA/CalendarofEvents/Conference/AD-2022-(1)). Please let us know if you do register so we can include you in the count for representatives from our hospital.
- The WHA Spring Tour and Southeastern District Meeting will be held virtually on May 10 and FWBH Partner Volunteers have the pleasure of hosting this meeting. Additional information regarding meeting specifics will be shared soon.
- At home sewers, as part of our updated infection/prevention guidelines, laundering of items should occur after the item is completed just prior to placing it into a sealed plastic Ziploc bag. Please reach out to your volunteer services lead if you are in need of plastic bags and what size.

In closing, with St. Patrick's Day just around the corner, I felt it fitting to share with you the following Irish Blessing:

*May your troubles be less, your blessings be more,  
and nothing but happiness come through your door!* 

Thank you for your gift of time, your talents and your dedication.

Keep on thinkin' spring!

*Ann Johnson*

Director, Volunteer Services  
Froedtert West Bend Hospital

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## Department Update

- Due to COVID regulations we will **not** have the Bake Sale in May.
- Comfort dog, Rhoda has resumed non-COVID patient visits at FWBH.

## Need to Know

### Joint Commission Window Now Open

Hospitals are regularly reviewed by the Joint Commission, on behalf of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (as well as other insurance carriers), to ensure they meet a minimum set of standards for funding and reimbursements. Surveyors show up unannounced so it's important we are prepared at all times. Froedtert West Bend Hospital's survey window is now until April 27. It's important to review your volunteer handbook and know where to find emergency procedures booklet in your volunteer area (red).

## Volunteers Needed

### Volunteer Shifts Available

- Cancer Center
  - Volunteer Needed for Folder/Binder assembly.
- Ambassadors Desk- both Health Center and Hospital
  - Volunteer responsibilities include welcoming and assisting patients, their families and visitors entering the hospital.
- Gift Shop Cashier
  - Volunteer responsibilities include providing customer service including cashiering, restocking and pricing.

### Mark your Calendar

- Volunteer Appreciation Week - April 24-30
- Southeast District Meeting – May 10

## Fundraising

- **Cookie Sale**-March 8, 2022
- **Cookie Sale**-March 29, 2022
- **Cookie Sale**-April 12, 2022
- **Collective Goods Sale**-April 26-27, 2022- (FWBH)
  - We are in need of volunteers to assist us with running our payroll deduction computer register and the Collective Goods register

**If interested in helping, or questions about any of the dates please contact  
Kayla Weninger at 262-836-8075 or [kayla.weninger@froedtert.com](mailto:kayla.weninger@froedtert.com).**

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## Gift Shop

### Well Wisher Transfers \$38,000 to Volunteers

Thank you to our small, but mighty, team of gift shop volunteers who kept our doors open during a very busy holiday season! Their amazing efforts during the holidays and every day have made it possible to transfer \$38,000 to Volunteer Services to help fund the Partner Wish List and support scholarships to local youth pursuing health careers.

In addition thank you to all of our volunteers for your support of the gift shop! Your purchases and word of mouth promotion are very important to our success and we are extremely grateful for your support!

Well Wisher receives new merchandise daily and you will not want to miss our beautiful new spring apparel in fabulous colors and styles. Stop by to see the newest trend in accessories—guitar strap handbags. Straps are available for purchase individually or with a bag. For those of you anxious to get out in the garden, we have rain chains, memorial stones, birdhouses and fun garden flags. You will also find a great selection of adorable gnome merchandise for St. Patrick's Day, Easter and spring.

Well Wisher is welcoming new volunteers. The cash register is very user friendly and no prior experience necessary. Stop in to the gift shop, or contact Keri Schwartz to chat or to join the team.





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## Health Education

### MORE COVID

After 2 years of both triumphs and missteps, a lot of us have grown frustrated with science. Vaccines are miracles – or they're not. "Long Covid" is a thing – or it's A not. Omicron, Delta and other variants have thrown our best planning and predictions into chaos time and again. And across the country, public health practices are more and more driven by politics, media and culture rather than by science.

Until the Omicron variant emerged breakthrough infections in immunized individuals were rare. It appears that Omicron has a greater ability to circumnavigate the initial vaccine series and makes it even more urgent to add a booster and to take extra precautions. Unvaccinated people are 6 times more likely to catch Covid and 14 times more likely to die from it, according to CDC.

The fact is, all vaccines vary in their effectiveness. The goal set for Covid-19 was 50%; they surprised us by hitting over 90%. Our annual flu shots come in around 40 % – 60 % each year. But getting vaccinated dramatically stacks the odds in your favor and makes any illness you do experience much less severe.

It's entirely normal for antibodies generated by vaccines to wane over time and require a boost. What we know is that even after 2 Covid immunizations our antibody levels drop and that's why we need boosters. The fact is that the virus is changing, and our approach to it has to change as well.

"Herd Immunity" occurs when a large enough portion of a community becomes immune to a disease that its spread from person to person becomes unlikely. How high that portion needs to be is based largely on how contagious the disease is; the more easily it spreads, the more people you need to be immune in order to contain it. As to Covid, science hasn't yet determined the threshold, but estimates put it at north of 90% of the population.

**By: Joanne Shirkey -Community Health Education Lead**

## Membership

- Adults = 77
- Teens = 2
- New member applications are now being accepted and interviews have started and are being conducted.

## Public Policy

- Public policy update, submitted by Sharon Scott:
  - Update included information on the new "Protect the Frontline" legislation to add threats in addition to violence as means for additional protection for staff.
  - Update also discussed "White Bagging" which is a practice that insurance companies have been using when it comes to medication distribution.

## Scholarships

- 17 applications have been submitted from students at West Bend East/West, Slinger, Kewaskum, Living Word, and Kettle Moraine Lutheran.
- Committee will be reviewing candidates and making selections over the next few weeks.

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## Team Lead Updates

### Mailroom-Patient Folders Totals for Froedtert West Bend Hospital:

- December 2021- **582** folders made
- February 2022- **366** folders made

## WHA Partner Updates

### WHA's 2022 Virtual Advocacy Day on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

- Here is the link to sign-up if you wish to attend- <https://www.wha.org/EducationEvent?EventID=387>

**Southeastern District Meeting will be held on May 10, 2022**

### Froedtert West Bend Hospital Volunteer Services Department

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