

# The Auxiliary Pulse

Fall - 2023



## President's Message - Bunny McElliott

*The only constant in life is change.* That is an understatement for our work at TCMC, especially over the last few months! While we see change, there is also a constant...the reliability of our people, giving a bit of ourselves, and leaving a trail of kindness behind. Thanks for being part of that gift to TCMC.

The current financial stress on TCMC, and most community hospitals, is well known. Hospital leaders are working very hard making sure we remain a vital resource for our community. While our Auxiliary can't fix the hospital issues, we can and will continue to deliver quality service and create positive outcomes throughout the hospital. We continue to affirm and encourage the hospital staff, patients, and visitors with words of comfort and acts of kindness. Through all these changes, I feel our hospital will ultimately have a great outcome.



Not all change has been bad. While the NICU and Maternity Unit were suspended, just a few days later our ICU volunteers returned to service. Staff appreciation is still pouring in for this renewed service. Advocate's chairperson stepped down, just as NICU's chairperson was available to step into that role. One volunteer retires, and two new recruits join our Auxiliary. Change happens and often works out for best in the end.

Here are a few ways you can be part of the positive change. Call the office if you can help.

- Invite family or friends to join our Auxiliary. You could win one of our two recruiting raffles offered each quarter. Share the gift of volunteerism!
- Help with publicity. We need someone to help promote our Auxiliary through local newspapers and publications.
- Help decorate the waiting room for Christmas. We need a few extra hands in early December to bring the spirit of the season to Tri-City Medical Center.
- Shop in our Gift Shop. The funds are donated back to the hospital. Carol Vance and team work tirelessly to always have sweet gifts and precious cards.
- Step up. Join the leadership team as a chairperson or assistant chairperson.

On a final note, the North County Philanthropy Council will soon honor volunteers across our region. It is amazing how our society depends on volunteers to make a difference in the quality of our lives. Our Auxiliary Volunteer of the Year is Dick Robertson. Congratulations to Dick for his 35 years of service to TCMC as an Auxiliary Volunteer.

*The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance. - Alan Watts*

Bunny



## Department Spotlight

### Pet Therapy Beth Hulsart, Chair

We have added two new members in the last two months, bringing our Pet Therapy crew to twelve – ten of whom are visiting regularly. While our usual visit schedule takes us mainly to the Ortho/Neuro Rehab area greeting patients who are recovering from surgery, we also have the delight of rambling through the hospital meeting and greeting not only family members who are visiting patients but also connecting with members of the staff.



Beth Hulsart

Our visits to waiting areas and to nursing stations always elicit delight that the “fur squad” is available for petting. You can almost see the stress levels descend as folks reach out to greet our pups. As we visit, we continue to take photos to place in the always anticipated Pet Therapy calendar. If you see us out and about, don’t hesitate to say hi.



### Information Desk Donna McConnell, Chair



Donna McConnell

At the Information Desk our main purpose is welcoming visitors to Tri-City Medical Center plus giving them a visitors pass. We pretty much are able to answer all questions that visitors ask such as directions to patient rooms, rehab, maternity, women’s center, ICU, medical records, cafeteria and many more. Flowers and cards that come into the hospital are delivered to the patient by our Desk personnel. I always say that not a day goes by that you don’t get asked a new question and possibly have to search for the answer.

Before Covid we had 40 volunteers at our desk. After Covid we now have 31. Usually there are two people working very shift. During Covid we really needed two people per shift because we had to write down each visitor’s name as only two people per day were allowed to visit – oh, people really got mad at us, but we smiled and stuck to our instructions. Now that Covid is past we are handling the Desk with 31 people. A few did not return, a couple went to other departments, and some were not comfortable returning.

Volunteering at the Information Desk is a very enlightening experience. We see many stages of visitors – overjoyed, anxious, worried, and most are very grateful for our help.

Also, we maintain the Voltrak sign-in machine. Often times it goes down and it is a successful task when we can get it back up and running,



## Flu Shots

It is once again that time of year. All Employees, Auxiliary, and Medical Staff are now welcome to stop by Employee Health Services for their annual flu vaccine.

### Beginning September 18

Monday – Friday (except holidays and flex days)

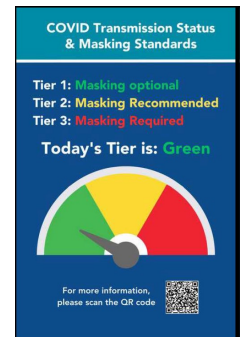
7:30am – 4:00pm (Closed noon to 1:00pm for lunch)

- ◆ A flu vaccination declination form is required for those choosing not to receive the flu vaccine and must be submitted to Employee Health Services by November 30, 2023.
- ◆ External documentation is accepted for those who choose to get the flu vaccine elsewhere and must be submitted to Employee Health Services by November 30, 2023.
- ◆ Persons choosing not to receive a flu vaccine will be required to wear a mask beginning November 30, 2023 through March 31, 2024.

Please contact Employee Health Services at 760-940-7270 should you have any questions.

## Masking

As you may know, the hospital masking policy is changeable daily based on the current spread of Covid in the community. Please check the posted condition for requirements or recommendations for that day. Masks are available at Security and at the Information Desk.



# Welcome

## New Members

We are very happy to welcome the latest new Auxiliary members who joined during the last three months. Each new member makes us stronger and of even greater service to TCMC and our community. Welcome all!

### **Advocacy**

Monica Valenzuela

### **Courtesy Shuttle**

Samantha Cedillo  
Robert Goldstein  
Robert Meisner

### **Escort Service**

Joyce Grube  
Jesse Zepeda

### **Gift Shop**

Asuka Andrews  
Janice Foster  
Cynthia Jerromes  
Natalie Taylor

### **Surgery**

Anna Goodway  
Regan Huerta  
Erica Martinez  
Mahesh Pai  
Alexa Riley

### **Pet Therapy**

Karen Arrieta  
Margaret Eggers

### **Information Desk**

Kristhaly Carvajal



## TCHA Volunteer of the Quarter

In recognition of their service, Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary is pleased to announce the **Department Volunteer of the Quarter** recipients for the Fourth Quarter of 2023.

### Clerical Department – Julie Walley



Julie began working in the Clerical Department in February of this year. She came to us with significant office and administration experience and has brought up many great ideas to make some things much easier. Not only does Julie work in our unit but at times she assists the Gift Shop and the Treasurer with their bookkeeping. Her energy and pleasant attitude are a wonderful addition to our team.

Sharon Hambly, Department Chair

### Courtesy Shuttle - Tim Burke

Tim has been a long-time member of the courtesy shuttle team, serving over 500 hours. He is always punctual performing his driving shifts and he is often recognized as being very courteous with his passengers. Tim is also very conscientious about the maintenance of the shuttles, and he is very prompt in reporting any issues that he feels are important to pass on.

Dave McCarthy, Department Chair



### Gift Shop – Kimberly Gross



Kimberly volunteers in the Gift Shop as our bookkeeper. She has helped to keep all our ledgers balanced and accurate. We had started a new bookkeeping system and it was a huge challenge to balance each day but Kimberly dug in and accomplished the task, keeping the Gift Shop balanced and accurate. Kimberly also trained a second bookkeeper Shirley, who also does a great job. In addition, Kimberly volunteers as an Escort. We so appreciate our volunteers.

Carole Vance, Department Chair

### Information Desk – Norma Aguilera

Norma has been volunteering for the past eight years. Before volunteering at the Information Desk, she worked in Women’s and Newborn Services. Norma is scheduled to work approximately twelve times each month and often will volunteer to substitute for people when they are sick or on vacation. Norma is a dedicated volunteer and takes her job seriously. She welcomes guests and is very knowledgeable about giving directions.

Donna McConnell, Department Chair





### Patient Advocacy - Ricardo Alvarez-Malo



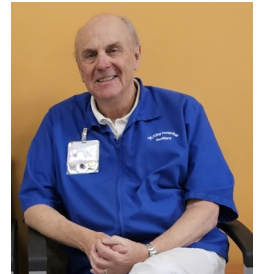
Ricardo is a valued member of Patient Advocacy. He is a perfect match for this special department, being caring, patience, and compassionate in dealing with the inpatients. Speaking two languages is a bonus when visiting patients. As our Assistant Chair Ricardo assists with training and keeping the computer documents and program up and running. He has also volunteered with the Vaccine Clinic phone bank, Patient Escort, and Courtesy Shuttle.

Pam Servais, Department Chair

### Patient Escort Department – Peter Fusselman

Joining in 2014, Peter has recorded over 1600 hours of service. His service is truly commendable having worked diverse roles in Pet Therapy, Patient Escort, Vaccine Clinic, and Advocacy showcasing his commitment to making a positive impact. Peter has also, served on the Board of Directors as Historian, Pulse Editor, and in various other capacities reflecting his valuable contributions to the Auxiliary. He is always thoughtful and kind with everyone...patients and staff. Everyone loves working with him. Whenever something is needed Peter steps up to get the job done.

Kathey Cramm, Department Chair



### Registration Department – Daryl Wasano



The Registration Department's Volunteer of the Quarter is Daryl Wasano. Daryl is very loyal, on time, and very kind to patients. He is also helpful when substitutes are needed in the department.

Chris Sheets, Department Chair

### Surgery Department – Justin McCulpin

The Surgery Department selects Justin McCulpin as its Volunteer of the Quarter. Justin is an ambitious young man who works a part-time job, attends full-time school, and also volunteers on a steady basis at Tri-City Hospital. His curiosity, dedication to our department, and responsibly will bring him closer to his goal of becoming a physician. We are so fortunate that Justin has chosen our department to further his skills; thank you Justin for all you do to make our department a success.



### We Have a Winner!

Congratulations to Jane Palmiotti, the first winner in our Auxiliary Recruiting Challenge. Jane will receive a \$25 gift card for recruiting a new Auxilian, Cynthia Jerome. You can be our next big winner by recruiting a new member and filling out the entry form. Details are available in the Clerical Office or in the Summer 2023 *Pulse* Newsletter. Welcome Cynthia and thank you Jane.





## A POSITIVE PATH FORWARD: AN UPDATE FROM TRI-CITY'S CEO

Dear Tri-City Team,

As we look toward the future of Tri-City, I am excited to share our progress and address some important topics that have been circulating lately. Let's embark on this journey together with transparency, optimism, and a focused vision.

### **Our Financial Outlook and Recent Developments**

First and foremost, I want to emphasize Tri-City's commitment to our community remains unwavering. While the past couple of years have brought challenges to our doorstep, we've worked tirelessly to address them head-on. The rising costs of healthcare coupled with stagnant reimbursement rates, COVID-related financial losses, and unprecedented inflation have affected our financial health. However, let me address some of the misinformation that has been circulating. First, there have been rumors about Tri-City being sold.

I want to unequivocally state that this is FALSE. While we are exploring opportunities to collaborate with other health systems in ways that create value for both Tri-City and potential partners, we are not considering a sale. Our commitment to our community and our district remains steadfast.

Second, Tri-City is not insolvent. We've been very transparent in our employee engagement discussions and in communications with our community that the last two fiscal years have been extremely challenging. We have navigated these rough waters with determination and are already implementing plans that promise a brighter financial future. Our district is not burdened by any significant debt obligations, we have tremendously valuable assets, and we are already delivering on our turnaround and cash flow plans. This means that unlike many other facilities, Tri-City's struggles are short term.

We must remain persistent in our commitment to address our issues, and focus on meeting our long-term commitment to the community and patients we serve.

The past few years have significantly impacted our reserves and savings. As a result, we have met the criteria to apply for the distressed hospital loan program through the State of California. This program provides interest-free loans to hospitals with solid turnaround plans and offers a chance for us to support our financial goals. I am pleased to announce that we recently received notification of one of the largest sums awarded in the State—\$33.2 million. This substantial support underscores our significance within the community and reflects the confidence that State financial analysts have in our turnaround strategy. This funding provides us with a bridge—a bridge to a future where we can rebuild and emerge even stronger.

### **Women & Newborn Services and Our Path Ahead**

I know there are hopes that the loan will lead to the reopening of Women & Newborn Services (WNS). While I share your desire for a return of these services, it's important to recognize the loan serves as a catalyst for change, not an instant solution to our past challenges. To ensure a successful turnaround, we must remain committed to our carefully designed plans. This has involved tough decisions essential to the sustainability and growth of our hospital.





Rest assured, our board is dedicated to exploring partnerships that will eventually pave the way for a revitalized WNS—one that honors our long-standing commitment to our dedicated staff and our community.

### **Our Path to Recovery**

Tri-City's journey to recovery has been marked by your unwavering dedication. We've made significant strides in recent months by focusing on operational enhancements, identifying savings opportunities, and implementing initiatives to boost revenue. These efforts are showing positive results, and we are expanding our permanent workforce to ensure Tri-City will always be there to support and serve the health of our community.

### **Your Role in Our Journey Forward**

As we build our path to financial stability, I encourage each of you to embrace your role in our collective success:

#### *1. Deliver the Tri-City Experience*

Our unique sense of family sets us apart. Let's extend this warmth and care to every patient who walks through our doors, providing the exceptional experience that makes Tri-City special.

#### *2. Champion Quality*

Our dedication to quality has yielded outstanding outcomes. No matter the challenges, let's keep quality at the forefront, demonstrating our commitment to excellence.

#### *3 Prioritize Patient Needs*

Let our value—"The needs of our patients come first"—guide every interaction, ensuring we serve our patients and community with compassion and integrity.

#### *4. Ask and Engage*

Change comes with questions. If something doesn't add up or makes you wonder, please ask. Your input is invaluable, and we are committed to making things right if we stumble.

#### *5. Be Our Ambassadors*

Stand up for our hospital and take pride in the care we provide. Let's collectively silence any false rumors with the truth about our unwavering dedication.

### **Looking Ahead**

I won't sugarcoat the challenges we face, but I believe wholeheartedly in our plan and the potential it holds. As North County experiences remarkable growth, Tri-City stands ready to play a transformative role in its healthcare landscape. Our journey is marked by hope, resilience, and progress. It's time to embrace the possibilities and turn the page toward a brighter future.

With deep gratitude and optimism,

Gene Ma, M.D.



## Meet your Board of Directors

As reported in our last edition of *Pulse*, July 1 marked the beginning of our fiscal year and the term for our newly elected Board of Directors. Here are your leaders and their assigned duties. Let's thank them all for their efforts on our behalf.

### Officers



#### **Bunny McElliott - President**

The President provides overall organizational vision and leadership. The President appoints committees and Board Members as necessary and is the primary spokesperson and the face of the Auxiliary.

#### **Liz Brayton - First Vice President**

The First Vice President assists the President and assumes those duties when the President is unavailable. The First Vice President also plans the PALs Luncheon for Past Presidents each January.



#### **Kathy Cramm - Second Vice President**

Next in line to assist the President, the Second Vice President also appoints Department Chairs, holds the monthly Chairperson's meetings, and helps with the annual Refreshers.

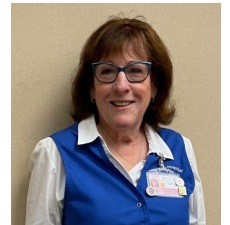
#### **Valerie Barros - Recording Secretary**

The Recording Secretary keeps records of all meetings, proceedings, and Board actions. The Secretary also keeps copies of all written ballots and the Auxiliary By-Laws and Policies and Procedures manual and handles correspondence with members and other organizations as is needed by the organization.



#### **Rosalind Bussey - Treasurer and Mary Foy – Assistant Treasurer**

The Treasurer is responsible for all financial activity and records. The Treasurer provides regular financial reports to the Board and oversees an annual review of our fiscal condition.



### Board Members



#### **Carole Vance – Gift Shop Manager**

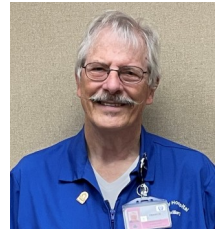
The Gift Shop Manager oversees the ongoing activities of the TCMC Gift Shop and is responsible for staffing, purchasing, sales, and financial reporting of Gift Shop activities.





**Francis Crowley – Historian**

The Historian creates an annual pictorial record of the Auxiliary’s activities and events and maintains the database of Auxiliary photos. The Historian works with the *Pulse* Editor and Public Relations Team, providing information and photos for publication.



**Michael Unverferth – Orientation and Operations**

The Orientation Director oversees the placement of all members, from arrival through any Department changes. He conducts regular orientation sessions for new Regular Volunteers and works with the Second Vice President on the placement of Chairpersons and Co-Chairpersons as well as on the annual Refresher Courses. He is also responsible for the Joint Commission requirements and implementation of mandatory programs.

**Jane Palmiotti - Parliamentarian**

The Parliamentarian uses Robert’s Rules of Order to advise the Board on process and also oversees the Auxiliary election process and semi-annual review of both the Policies and Procedures and the By-Laws.



**Kate Browne, Sharon Hambly, Dave McCarthy & Mary Foy – Public Relations**

Public Relations directors keep track of membership rolls using data from the Voltrak system. Forming a committee, they go into the community to recruit using the written word, attendance at community events, or word-of-mouth. They work closely with the Historian and President.



**Nancy Russian – Scholarship**

The Scholarship Director represents the Auxiliary Scholarship Committee. They update our Board on information and events of the annual Tri City Hospital Auxiliary Scholarships presented in the Spring. Information includes financials, donors, and event night needs.

**Dick Roberts – Ways and Means**

The Ways and Means Director provides the Board with financial analysis relating to the fiscal impact of events or activities. He also leads all memorial fund and planning efforts.



**Linda Wolff – President Emeritus**

The President Emeritus is a nonvoting past-president of the board. They provide leadership and guidance to the Executive Board of Directors; mentor the Executive President in proceedings of the association; and provide a historical perspective in the decision-making process.



## Advocacy Departments Names New Chair



Carol Saunders

After nearly ten years as Chair of the Advocacy Department, Carol Saunders recently stepped down with Pam Servais now filling this role. Carol came to her leadership in Advocacy shortly after joining the Auxiliary in 2013. At the time, she thought she would do the job for three months. Finding Advocacy an important place to work, she stayed ten years.

Carol was instrumental in organizing this department, making it a vital and effective way to serve TCMC patients. She performed excellent training, monitoring various protocol changes, and made sure extra goodies are available for the patients. The transition to collecting patient input via computer was recognized as a good step toward improved patient care. Carol looks forward to continuing as an Auxilian.

Taking up the reins as Chair of Advocacy is Pam Servais. Pam has been Chair of our NICU department, which recently closed just as the Advocate Chair position became available. Pam has a background in education and has also been mentoring with various local organizations, making this new position a great fit. She is really excited to be part of Advocacy and will have Ricardo Alvarez-Malo continue as Assistant Chair. Ricardo is invaluable in keeping the computer problem free and is very helpful in training.



Pam Servais



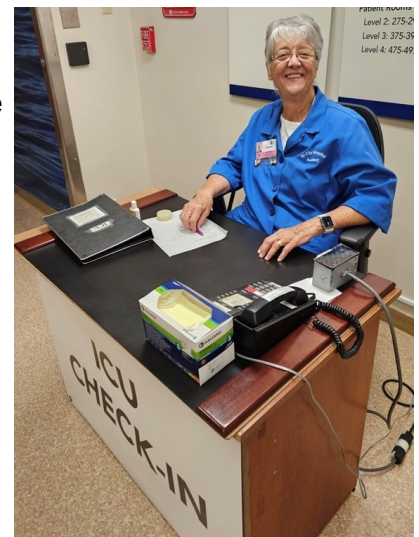
## Return of ICU Under RoseMarie Castellano

We are very pleased to announce the reopening of yet another Auxiliary department. On September 11 our ICU volunteers returned after a long absence under the leadership of their Chair RoseMarie Castellano. RoseMarie has spent the last month making arrangements, getting furniture and supplies, as well as meeting with ICU managers to organize the work to be done by our Auxilians.

To say that the ICU staff is overjoyed to have our volunteers back would be a major understatement. Same can be said of the volunteers who have returned to their previously held positions in ICU.

Our ICU Auxilians help visitors enter unit, provide information about places in hospital where they can sit and eat, and provide a comforting face during the stressful times while a family or friend is in ICU.

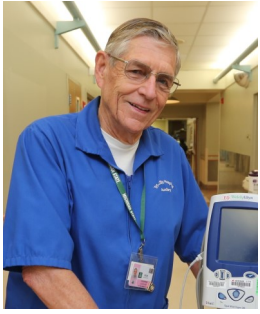
The staff couldn't be happier. ICU is a busy place. Having a knowledgeable caring person as the gate keeper relieves staff to do their lifesaving intensive care work.



RoseMarie Castellano



## Volunteer of the Year Announced



It is once again time to honor one of our own as the Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary Volunteer of the Year. Each year an individual is selected who has been dedicated to our mission and diligent in performing the day-to-day work that makes the Auxiliary strong.

Past recipients have included Judy Howard-Jones, Connie Jones, Donna McConnell, Bunny McElliott, and Jane Palmiotti. Through leadership and dedication, these individuals have represented the Auxiliary as an important part of patient care at the Tri-City Medical Center.

Joining this elite group of volunteers as our 2023 Volunteer of the Year is Dick Robertson. Dick joined the Auxiliary in 1990, making him a 33-year veteran. Over his impressive Auxiliary career, he has served in the Emergency Department, Surgery, and is currently working at the Information Desk.



Dedicated to educating future healthcare leaders, Dick has served many years on the Auxiliary Scholarship Committee providing the much needed liaison with local colleges and universities. In fact, Dick is the face of this Auxiliary program acting as Master of Ceremonies at the annual Scholarship Awards night event.

During the Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic, Dick was a regular fixture at the front desk, working nearly 60 hours, welcoming individuals as they got their first and second shot. Since 2017 Dick has served on the Auxiliary Board of Directors, filling the role of Ways and Means Director.

Please join in congratulating Dick on this important and well deserved honor.



## Scholarship Donors Wanted

Our Auxiliary has supported local nursing and medical students with scholarships since 1973, having awarded more than \$1,300,000 to date. Last April, 68 scholarships of up to \$1,000 each were provided to worthy local students.

These awards are possible thanks to the financial gifts of our many generous donors. These included individual Auxiliaries, community members, TCMC administration and staff, Tri-City Healthcare District Board of Directors, physicians, physician groups, and local retirement communities. Donors personally meet recipients at our Awards Night. Each tax deductible donation of \$1000 will sponsor one scholarship recipient.



For more information about how you can contribute as a donor to this worthwhile event, stop by the Auxiliary Office or email [Auxiliary@tcmc.com](mailto:Auxiliary@tcmc.com) and request more information.

Tax ID: 95-6055533



## Remembering Birthdays

BIRTHDAYS! - Yes, we all have them and hopefully they are filled with lots of good cheer and fun times. Over the next few months a few of our fellow Auxilians have celebrated or will celebrate their festive day. Happy Birthday to all!

### October

Peggy Anstey  
Debbie Babbitt  
Sherylin Barrido  
Valerie Barros  
Roberta Birchall  
Kulpreet Chhokar  
Shirley Daffer  
Marianne Eritano  
Norma Henkle  
Robert Meisner  
Eloise Nicosia  
Jasmine Rios  
Pamela Servais  
Christine Sheets  
Bonnie Stang

### November

Norma Aguilera  
Asuka Andrews  
Linda Donahue  
Kathryn Everhart  
Madeline Gibson  
Sharon Hambly  
Nancy Miller  
William Moore  
Nancy Ogomori  
Mary Sulek  
Natalie Taylor  
Joyce Toft  
Anh Tong  
Marguerite Voyemant  
Daryl Wasano  
Janice Williams

### December

Kathleen Ahlfors  
Catherine Brownie  
Mary Foy  
Elizabeth Galati  
Christopher Gandara  
Mary Gleisberg  
Bernadette McElliott  
Nguyen Nguyen  
Jane Palmiotti  
Saxon Rawlings  
Judy Rice  
Nancy Russian  
Thomas Streeter  
Barbara Watt



## Gift Shop for Holiday Giving

Thinking of a holiday gift for that special someone? Yes, the holiday shopping season is upon us and your Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary Gift Shop is going to be a great place to find that perfect gift or Christmas decoration. The Christmas Shop will be open and ready to go on October 28, but you never know, their might be a one-of-a-kind item ready right now. Next time you are at the Medical Center be sure to drop by and check it out.



### Clerical Department Hours

|           |                 |
|-----------|-----------------|
| Monday    | 8:30am - 4:00pm |
| Tuesday   | 8:30am - noon   |
| Wednesday | 8:30am - 4:00pm |
| Thursday  | 9:00am - 1:00pm |
| Friday    | Closed          |

### Pulse Assistant Editor Wanted

Interested in exercising that writing talent or just learning more about the Auxiliary? The *Pulse* newsletter is looking for an Assistant Editor. If you think you might be interested, email us at [PeterFusselman@yahoo.com](mailto:PeterFusselman@yahoo.com).

## TRI-CITY HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

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