

The Auxiliary Pulse

Winter - 2025



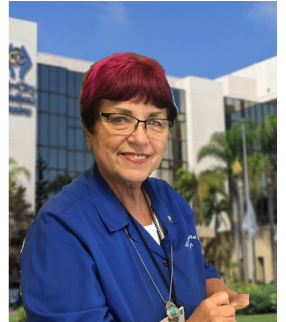
President's Message - Bunny McElliott

Gratitude! Yes, that is what I am feeling. There is little more encouraging than gratitude. I am very grateful for so much.

First is my gratitude for this hospital. It's like the little engine that could, cranking, huffing, and puffing. It just keeps surpassing all expectations. Of course, this doesn't just happen, it takes endless hours examining, refocusing, surveying, changing behaviors, setting goals, improving mindsets, and lots of teambuilding. Our TCMC leadership team does it all. Positive progress affirms it. I am grateful for dedication to our community hospital.

Our Auxiliary! Over and over, the TCMC leadership and staff have affirmed us...how our presence is positive, welcoming, important, and needed. We aren't just sweet little figures running around with no purpose. Our work here is powerful and meaningful! We have influence in the culture of this hospital.

Some may ask how we calculate the worth of our Auxiliary. This is not possible because it is invaluable. I marvel at the generosity of time, talent, and gifts you all bring to this special place every time you set foot here. I'd like to share part of a poem I recently wrote. It really says it all:



Bunny McElliott
President

With hearts filled with giving, our Auxiliary volunteers
Have been serving our hospital for 70+ years!
I decided to list our blessings right then,
With so many moments, I didn't know where to begin.

But soon the memories of moments galore,
Came tumbling out, 100's and more.
The thousands of patients, visitors, and employees
We've greeted and assisted and for not a fee.

Drivers in shuttles, giving a lift
Registration and Escort....my what a gift!
A friendly smile, a consoling word
Who knows the power of what was heard.

Where is my mother, husband, wife or my friend?
Info desk gives directions...take the hall to the end!
Children coming along get a sweet little bug
All made by the Workshop, for those kiddos to hug.

Clean gurneys and charts done by our Surgery crew,
All is prepared and arranged for the next patient to use.
ICU is ready with a comforting smile
Assisting families who have been waiting awhile.

Clerical keeps track of our volunteer's requirements,
Making sure Auxiliary meets state hospital compliance.
Orientation calls applicants and invites them to come
Join our Auxiliary to aid in our mission, by gum!

Pulse keeps us motivated, informed and upbeat,
While Gift Shop works hard to earn our donation feat.
Advocates chat with inpatients and pass on their needs,
Pet Therapy pups give love and support, so special indeed.

As for our Auxiliary, we serve through the year,
Each day, week, and month is filled with good cheer!
With so many ways to simply give back
I'm glad our auxiliary helps lessen any lack.

May you all be filled with gratitude and joy for all you bring to TCMC. May 2025 be as abundantly fulfilling to you all as it is for the hospital.



Chair's Corner

We talk a lot about patients and their families being the most important people in our world. You have all done a superb job of representing that in 2024.

As we begin 2025 let's take the time to reflect on how to get the most out of your volunteer experience. Here are some things to think about:



Kathey Cramm
Second Vice President

1. Find an opportunity you enjoy - You will get a lot more out of volunteering if you find something you are passionate about and look forward to doing. Don't be afraid to switch to a different position if you find out that your first one (or second) isn't a great fit. Department Chairs can be an awesome resource and can help you find an opportunity that you can enjoy.



2. Bring a positive attitude to every shift - Don't be that volunteer who looks like they don't want to be volunteering. While it may be difficult to be positive when you are bored, just came from a long day of classes, or had to deal with a difficult patient or staff member, it really does make a big difference. A smile and a positive attitude go a long way!

3. Be friendly - This is one of the most important things you can do as a volunteer. As a volunteer, you have the opportunity to improve the patient experience by simply bringing your smile to your shift, greeting guests with a warm welcome, and offering help as needed. Don't be afraid to initiate conversations! Volunteering is a great way to make connections with the staff as well. Introduce yourself and let them know (both verbally and through your actions) that you are there and willing to help. Once they get to know you, they might even ask you to do even more exciting things! Maybe you can even get a few new opportunities out of it as well.



4. Know your limits - It seems like common sense, but make sure that you understand your duties as a volunteer. If a patient asks you to help them with something you can't do, politely let them know that you are not trained to do so and explain that you would be happy to find someone who can help them. Also be aware that not all staff will know what the volunteers can and can't do, so you may have to politely decline if they ask you to do something that you are not trained to do.



5. Don't be afraid to ask questions - If you are ever unsure of what to do, always ask! As a volunteer, you have a great opportunity to learn from all of the staff and many are willing to answer your questions to help you learn. When in doubt, don't be afraid to ask!

6. Anticipate needs - See that visitor looking confused or at a hospital map? Ask if they need help finding something. You don't always need to wait for someone to approach you to help. Taking the initiative when it appears that someone could use a hand shows your willingness to help. Patients and staff appreciate it!

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Chairs Corner

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7. Be observant - As a volunteer, you are fortunate enough to get great exposure to the medical field. Even if you aren't asked to do exciting tasks, you can always be observant and learn from the environment around you. You might even notice more areas that you can help with. Soak it all in!

8. Make the most of your experience - Most volunteer roles are very flexible and allow you some freedom. Don't be a volunteer who sits around your entire shift doing absolutely nothing. Be passionate and enjoy the experience! You get out what you put in, so don't be afraid to get your hands dirty and help out as much as you can. You can make it a valuable experience if you want to.

9. Know that you are making a difference - We all know that volunteers don't get to do the most exciting tasks. Most volunteers don't usually realize that they are making a difference for both the patients and staff. Even the smallest of tasks, like holding open the door for someone or greeting a patient with a smile, can really make a difference! The little things make a big difference.



10. Have fun! - Never forget that volunteering should be a fun experience for you! Find something you enjoy, be positive, and know that you are indeed helping others. Volunteering can get long and boring at times, but just realize that it can be a great experience. And if you aren't having fun, you can always try something else! Volunteers are always needed in most departments.

You are all valued members of the TCMC family. Let's look forward to a great 2025. Keep up the great work!



Remembering Nancy Kukawaka

Just a few short months ago we honored the passing of longtime Auxilian Stan Kukawaka. We now remember his wife Nancy Kukawaka who passed away recently. A native of Michigan, Nancy began volunteering at TCMC in 2005. She served nearly 20 years in the Intensive Care Unit, devoting nearly 3,000 hours. Nancy was a joyous volunteer and is quoted as saying, "If we had a 'do over,' there are few things I would change."



Spotlight on Department Gift Shop

Carole Vance, Chair



The main function of the Gift Shop is to acquire funds for the Auxiliary to donate to Tri-City Hospital each June. In June 2024 the Auxiliary donated \$45,000 to the hospital through these efforts.

The Gift Shop had a fair year in 2023-2024, however, due to the shortage of volunteers we are still unable to be open our normal operating hours. Before COVID the Gift Shop was open 58 hours a week. At this time we are only able to be open approximately 35 hours.

We had 62 volunteers before COVID and now have 26 volunteers for the Gift Shop operation and two volunteers that are bookkeepers to balance all our transactions. The shifts are from 9:15am to 1:15pm and 12:45pm to 4:45pm. We are closed on Saturdays but are open from 11:15am to 3:15pm on Sundays.

We enjoy helping everyone who visits the shop including the hospital employees. The employees are some of our best customers. They often come to the Gift Shop to purchase, but also to visit and unwind. They all love candy! Our fellow Auxilians are also some of our best customers. If you visit the Gift Shop be sure to ask about our special Volunteer Discount program.

There are many functions to learn in order care for the customers. We offer TCMC employees the opportunity to purchase and have it charged on a payroll deduction plan. We always accept cash or credit card for anyone making a purchase. When there are no customers, the volunteers restock and clean all shelves.

We try to put out new merchandise each week to keep the customers interested and visiting often. We also have special sales periodically. The hospital helps us by publishing notice of our sales in the hospital newsletter.

When each volunteer starts their shift they must balance a cash fund and go through an opening process in the cash register. When the shift ends the volunteer runs a closing register tape and must balance the funds for the bookkeepers. There is quite a bit of paperwork involved in balancing and a lot of process to remember. We do have a handbook for the volunteer to refer to as needed.

Most of the volunteers work once a week, coming in for the same shift each time. A few volunteers have responsibilities to help with shop operations. Dee Coleman orders the greeting cards, Chris Wellenstein orders the candy, and Carolyn Wysong helps prepare the monthly schedules. This definitely helps to keep the shop humming along.

We all enjoy volunteering in the Gift Shop and assist in any way to make everyone's shopping experience pleasant.



Spotlight on Department Patient Escort Service Kathey Cramm, Chair



The Patient Escort Service assists patients and family members who have come to the hospital for a procedure in one of the numerous departments at Tri-City Medical Center (TCMC). We try to provide two escorts for each four-hour shift, Monday through Friday.



Registration office staff bring patients and necessary paperwork to the volunteers, who then take the patient to the designated TCMC service area. We try to be friendly and talk with them, letting them know we care.

At the destination, we transfer the patient to hospital staff along with the necessary paperwork.

We also locate vacant wheelchairs as needed. We clean these chairs and store them in the Registration waiting area and at the front entrance of the hospital.

When requested, we provide wheelchair service for patients and family members to various locations throughout the hospital.

We assist any visitor who stops us in the hallways and asks for help.

We currently have 23 active volunteers covering between 40 and 44 shifts each month.

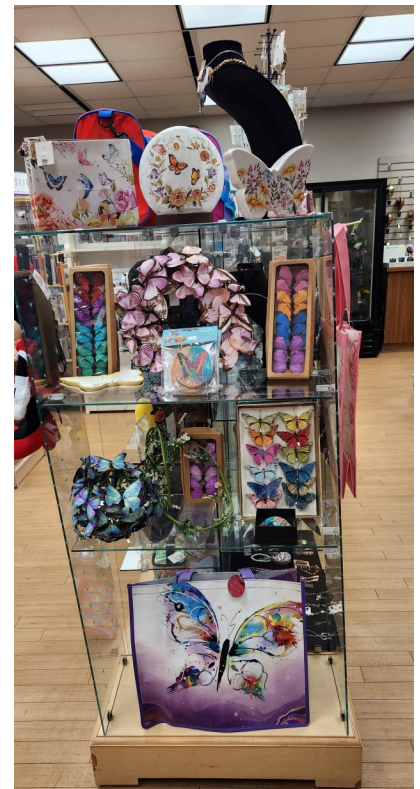


Auxiliary Gift Shop

As you probably know, Gift Shop sales fund the Auxiliary's annual gift to the hospital. Every penny counts and our Gift Shop leadership helps boost income by making our own flower arrangements. You can help by donating any bud vases you may have around the house. Please remember that these will be offered for sale so we can only use undamaged vases.

Feel free to drop off donated vases whenever convenient. Gift Shop hours are Monday through Thursday, 9:30am to 4:00pm, Friday 10:00am to 3:00pm, and Sunday from 11:30am to 3:00pm.

The holidays may be over but there are still lots of great shopping opportunities at our Auxiliary Gift Shop. Looking for something cute for the house, or a warm winter poncho? We have a nice selection. Stop by and browse before or after your next volunteer shift.





Meet the Chairperson

Our Auxiliary runs smoothly thanks in large part to those amazing department leaders we call Chairpersons. Without their dedication and guidance, we could not operate, let alone succeed. These individuals work behind the scenes, rarely getting the recognition they deserve. We thought you might like to know more about one of these special people, RoseMarie Castellano.

RoseMarie first volunteered from 1980 to 1995 with the Angel Society in Fallbrook, a local nonprofit organization supporting worthy local causes through operation of its thrift store. In 1998 RoseMarie joined the Auxiliary on our Clerical team.



Family responsibilities required that she take a short leave of absence from 2000 to 2002, when she returned as Co-Chair of the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) alongside Elaine Harmon. During this time, she also worked with the Patient Education effort taking place in the Orthopedics Department along with Connie Jones. On the Scholarship Committee, RoseMarie coordinates scholarships for our high school and college applicants. She served briefly on the Auxiliary Board of Directors.



As Chair of the ICU Department she interviews potential team members, trains new volunteers, and prepares the monthly schedule. As part of her team-building effort, RoseMarie arranges regular no-host gatherings both at her home and local restaurants.

ICU volunteers sit outside the door of the unit helping visitors during this most stressful time. They also help direct visitors coming from Telemetry and maintain a yummy candy dish. The department currently has eight volunteers, however, prior to the COVID shutdown 21 members worked three shifts a day, seven days per week.

RoseMarie is a proud first-generation Italian American whose father and mother immigrated from Northern Italy and found work on a small Southern California flower farm. In time he purchased his own farm and grew this into a prosperous wholesale flower business.

This business, Mellano and Company, currently has about 200 employees with growing, wholesale, and shipping operations in Carlsbad, Oceanside, Orange County, LA County, and Las Vegas. This includes the growing aspect of the Carlsbad Flower Fields. While her daughter and nephews are the primary operators, RoseMarie remains involved and committed to future success of this family business that will celebrate their 100th year of business in 2025.



As with all our dedicated Chairpersons, we thank RoseMarie for all she does.



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

Aroe Jon Lamuna

Clerical

Heidi Radaford

Escort Service

Daniel Lee
Claire Berger

Information Desk

Wendy Garcia
Minerva Tamayo

Intensive Care Unit

Shan Zheng
Vanessa Marascola
Stephanie Martinez

Registration

Brent Gozun
IP Chen

Surgery

Ruohan Zheng
Colin Cruz
Merideth Reid
Charlee Schubert
Leslie Frederiksen



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!



January

Kristhaly Carvajal
Colin Cruz
Michelle Dang
Mary Gonzales
Cynthia Jerromes
Debra Johnson
Vanessa Marascola
Charlee Schubert
Caroline Talebi
Carl Toft

February

Fran Adamson
Karen Arrieta
Kathleen D'Avanzo
Laisha De La Torre
Elliot Ellis
Paula Foster
Robert Goldstein
Suzanne Knauf
Ellen Liebert
Sheila Manalo
Justin McCalpin
Andrew Roelen
Daisy Sanchez
Craig Stewart
Megan Strange
Carolyn Wysong

March

RoseMarie Castellano
Jorgina Cram-Walters
Joyce Grube
Kimrut Kaur
Susan Knapp
Pamela McCormick
Vickie Moskowitz
Elizabeth Ponec
David Quesenberry
Charles Shinnefield
Darlene Urzi-Tumino
Chris Wellenstein
Linda Wolff
Ruohan Zheng



TCMC Employee Partner Selected



We as volunteers are fortunate to work with some very nice, helpful employees of the Medical Center. They are respectful and always appreciative of our efforts. While all these efforts are appreciated, there always seems to be one individual that goes that extra few steps to make our volunteer efforts successful. In recognition of this, the Board of Directors decided to select and honor one such individual.

For his friendly nature and his willingness to help our volunteers whenever necessary, the Board has selected Security Manager Tim Viers as our TCMC Employee Partner for 2024.



Tim worked for SONY at their Rancho Bernardo facility rising to the position of Production Supervisor. When this plant closed in 1999 Tim became a probation officer for the City of San Diego where he remained for twenty years.

In 2020 Tim retired from the City of San Diego. He sought and was offered security positions at three local hospitals. He ultimately selected TCMC because he felt that it felt like a place he would belong. After four years he was promoted to Security Manager in 2024 where he manages 12 security officers.

A native of Kentucky, Tim's passion for basketball began as a member of his high school team, a team that won the state championship. It was this stellar basketball performance that drew the attention of the college scouts, leading to a four-year scholarship in Illinois. After graduating, he joined the United States Marines, serving four years as a Petroleum Supply Specialist.



At TCMC, Tim is very attentive to all who enter the hospital. He addresses the needs of everyone with a kind and caring manner. He assists patients, their families, our Auxiliary, and hospital employees. He is right there for us when new badges are needed and is always happy to assist with volunteer's questions, give directions, and deal with procedure inquiries.

For all that he does for the Medical Center and for the Auxiliary, Tim was honored at the Combined Board of Directors – Chairperson meeting in early December.



Care
Serve
Belong





TCMC Future Plans

As most of us know, Tri-City Healthcare District, which includes Tri-City Medical Center, has been going through some tough times. The reversal of the UCSD agreement may have been a stumble, but it is by no means the end of the story. The dedicated staff and leadership continue to seek a bright future for the hospital and the other District facilities.

At the joint meeting of our Board and Department Chairs, TCMC CEO Dr. Gene Ma briefed us on their efforts. Most immediately, he noted that at this time the hospital is operating without a financial loss. This is very important as it provides some breathing room as future options are considered.

Among the future options under consideration is some form of affiliation with a larger healthcare provider. Toward this end, professional assistance has been engaged to help locate and pursue a new partnership. As this work moves forward, the hospital continues to focus on providing the best possible care for its patients. Beyond the Medical Center, other District facilities are being operated to both serve our community and generate much needed revenue. Leadership also focuses on keeping its employees happy and secure.

Dr. Ma was once again generous in his praise for our Auxiliary and the role we play in making this a warm place where patients and visitors feel welcomed and cared for. While the future is never guaranteed, it is clear that all possible efforts are being made to revitalize Tri-City Medical Center and assure better days ahead.



Pulse Points

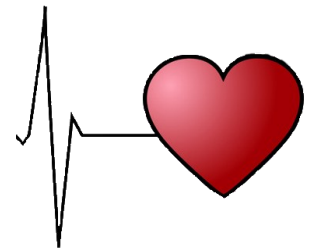
We like to keep in touch and while our *Auxiliary Pulse* newsletter provides lots of good information, it only comes out four times each year. In this fast moving world, that isn't always timely.

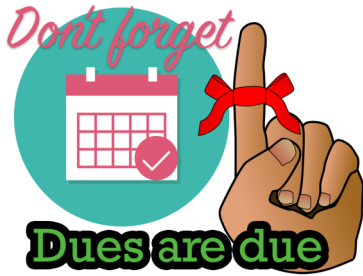
In an effort to improve our communication with our members, we have launched *Pulse Points*. Sent by email, this new communication covers important and interesting items we think are important to know. Here is how it works.

When an item becomes known, all members who have registered email accounts with us will be sent an email coming from "Volunteer" and the subject will be "*Pulse Points*." Several *Pulse Points* emails have already been sent. If you have an email address and have not received these, here is what you should do.

Sometimes email is unintentionally sent to your Spam folder. Check there first and move any *Pulse Points* emails to your inbox. If you still can't find it, please call or stop by the office to make sure we have your correct email address.

We hope you enjoy this new communication tool. Please feel free to let us know your thoughts on improving *Pulse Points* or any other item.





Time For Your Support

Each year in January, we collect Auxiliary membership dues for the current calendar year. Annual dues play an important part in funding the operation and activities of your Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary. This year our annual dues will once again remain at \$20. Your annual dues money goes toward

financing important, necessary expenses. These include:

- ◆ Software for our office operation
- ◆ Website maintenance
- ◆ Annual fee for the volunteer database, Voltrak
- ◆ Office supplies
- ◆ Volunteer service and hours recognition awards
- ◆ Various fees for state and federal not-for-profit registration
- ◆ Tax preparation and professional services

You should have received by regular mail an envelope asking for dues and information updates needed for our member directory. Please be sure to fill out the Directory information under the flap of the return envelope. This helps us keep current information on our members.

Please use the envelope provided to respond with your dues payment. Checks, made payable to *Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary*, or cash are accepted. Feel free to send your dues by mail or drop the envelope off in the Auxiliary office during their regular hours. Dues are tax deductible and our federal Tax Identification number is below.

We greatly appreciate the generosity of our members and should you wish to make an additional tax-deductible contribution, there is no better time than now and any additional donation would be most appreciated. Additional gifts help assure that our financial position remains strong and we are able to continue to serve our community.

Your dedication and devotion are greatly appreciated. We look forward to another great year of working together for Tri-City Medical Center through our Auxiliary.

Dues must be paid no later than February 28, 2025. Volunteers with unpaid dues will be unable to log into Voltrak, please get your dues in before the deadline. Thank you.

The Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary Tax ID number is: 95-6055533.





Publicity Update

We all do great work, and we know we do great work. However, it is really important that we tell the rest of the world, or at least North San Diego County, about our great work. If for no other reason, this helps us attract new members, the life blood of our future.

Fortunately, we have Valerie Barros as our Publicity Director, and she is doing an amazing job. Last fall she attended the Oceanside Senior Expo Meet & Greet, visited several senior centers to deliver our flyers, and made several local presentations. A photo of our brochures at the Oceanside Senior Center luncheon is to the right.



Thanks to a few of our members, Valerie got newsletters from four local Homeowners Associations with the plan to advertise or provide articles. Also helping Valerie is Daryl Wasano. Ricardo Alvarez-Malo won a \$50 gift card for submitting his community newsletter. Several articles were published as well.



Volunteers Rise to the Occasion



Our Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary volunteers really are a great group of people. They are dedicated to helping others and just generally doing good things. We have several recent examples of this we would like to share.

Not long ago our Patient Advocates asked for our help with supplies they use in their work. What was needed were reading glasses, colored pencils and a few pens. Our membership stepped up to the task.

As of this writing, we have received 20 pair of reading glasses, 84 boxes of colored pencils and 144 pens. Great job everyone.

Our giving sometimes extends beyond what is happening in the hospital. As you may remember, last November we participated with the hospital in a food drive benefiting the San Diego Food Bank. Recognizing how important it is to help reduce the level of food insecurity in our area, our members showed their community spirit and donated 590 food items.

Thank you all for giving generously of your time, your talents, and sometimes a few dollars.





Positive Thoughts

Most of us like to do business where other people say they are treated well. Modern online services like Google and Yelp have helped make this both easy and an important part of every business' marketing.

Hospitals are no different. In fact, major players like insurance companies and Medicare are aware of how specific hospitals are rated by their patients. We want them to know that patients and visitors feel welcome and well cared for at Tri-City Medical Center.

We can all help get the word out. If you are talking to someone and they mention that they had a good experience, ask them to write a review. If you or a family member have a good experience, write a review.

To help make these reviews as easy as possible, the Information Desk and the Gift Shop have cards with all you need to know. Be sure to spread the word.



Attention College Student Volunteers

We know that attending college while working and volunteering is a big job. You should be proud of your commitment to our community. You should also know that the Auxiliary sponsors a scholarship program every year.

If you are interested in applying for a Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary Scholarship, be sure to fill out an application as soon as possible. They are available at the Voltrak sign-in computer. Thank you for volunteering and thank you for your commitment to our community.



Keeping it Light

Reader's Digest used to have a column called, *Humor is the Best Medicine*. We can't confirm that prescription, but thought our readers might like a smile.

- ◆ Question: What do you tell a nurse when she administers an injection painlessly?
Answer: Good Job
- ◆ Question: What did the cookie say to the nurse? Answer: I am feeling crumbly.

Keep Smiling and Have a Very Happy Day!

TRI-CITY HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

4002 Vista Way Oceanside CA, 92056

T: 760-940-3125 E: auxiliary@tcmc.com www.tricityhospitalauxiliary.org