Christmas Decorating at the Hospital on Saturday morning, November 17, was much more than getting the Hospital ready for the holidays it was ...

many volunteers showing up to add a festive atmosphere into our Hospital environment.

They came from all over the hospital, giving extra time to fill the hospital with a touch of beauty and hope.

At the new entrance, (left photo) Ralph Flood, Chair of Acute Rehab, worked on the top of a tree with Amanda Windsor, Patient Care, Ann Zani, ED Ambassador, Jean Gerry, ASU-ADU-PACU, Sheila Hancock, ASU-ADU-PACU and Diane Stein, Front Desk.

Diane Stein and her husband, Dick, (right photo) are a delightful couple who will be married 51 years in January. They wintered nine years in The Villages before moving here permanently after having spent 15 years traveling around the country.

While Dick was in the hospital as a patient, Diane observed the staff and volunteers. Everyone was so kind, helpful and friendly. She shared with Dick that this was something they could do to "give back." Diane, Front Desk and Dick, Outside Transportation, have been volunteering for three years and they both love the interaction with visitors and patients they serve.

(continued on page 5)
UPDATE FROM LOU

Lou Emmert
Volunteer Coordinator

“The Holiday Season is the perfect time to reflect on our blessings and to seek out ways to make life better for those around us!”

It doesn’t seem possible that it is December already. I hope you were able to share Thanksgiving with family and friends and that you didn’t overload with football!

The weekend of November 17, several energetic volunteers, led by Sylvia Gardner, Sandy Gianuzzi and Billie Smith, decorated the hospital. The compliments are already coming in from the staff and other volunteers on how great the decorations look. Thank you to all those who helped decorate on November 17 and to the three ladies who did the planning and getting things ready to be placed.

While I was out and about the hospital recently, I overheard a couple of volunteers talking about their view of the hospital service and not in a positive way. Please remember that all volunteers are and should be “Ambassadors of Goodwill” for the hospital. You may be the first person a visitor encounters at the hospital and they could form their opinion based on you and your comments. While OUR hospital (as most do), has areas for growth and improvement, let us be mindful of the accomplishments achieved and the great service provided to the community. Do you know that TVRH has received accreditations from the regulatory agencies (Joint Commission, ACHA, etc.) and have been designated as a Primary Stroke Center, as well as received certifications in Chest Pain and Stroke? I am proud to be a part of this hospital and hope that each of you are also.

There are several changes that have taken place within the Volunteer Chair positions. Pat Kronk has retired as chair of the musicians, and in addition, George and Gloria Counselman have cut back on their many responsibilities. George will no longer be chair of the students or ASU/PACU/ADU and Gloria will no longer be chair of the VPO (Volunteer Placement Office) or ARCE. They are both still very active in other areas, including the Foundation. The following individuals have accepted chair positions: Sam Sica and Carol Emms are co-chairs of ASU/PACU/ADU; Tony Soldano is now chair of the musicians; Doug Terry has accepted the chair of ARCE testing; and Jim Lemon is chair of the Foundation volunteers. My wholehearted thanks go to each of these individuals for accepting these positions. If any of you would like to become a chair of a department, please contact Jeannie Rogale, jeanniero@comcast.net or me at, lemmert@centflhealth.org. We would love to talk with you about opportunities.

I’m also very interested in your thoughts and suggestions on how we can be a better Auxiliary organization. While I think we are a great organization, I believe we can always be better. Please send any comments to me at lemmert@centflhealth.org.

Best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you and yours!
NEW VOLUNTEERING SOFTWARE IS COMING

Early in 2019 we will be transitioning from the Volunteer Reporting software to Volgistics. Volgistics is a software that reports on volunteer activities and profiles, providing detailed information for coordinators and managers to work with. With Volgistics you can quickly and easily generate reports needed using one of the stock reports built into the system, or a custom report you make yourself with an easy-to-use interface. Elena Goulet and Mike Kauffman are diligently working to upload all volunteers into this system and then checking to make certain all data transfers accurately. This software has many advantages to the VR system we presently use and we will phase in those capabilities as we move along with the transition. As a volunteer and user of the Volgistics system, you will need to key in your badge number rather than scan it. But in the future sometime you will have the capability to go on-line and change your address, phone number and other personal profile information. Several hospitals in this area use Volgistics and give it an “A” rating, such as Shands. So stay tuned and we will give you additional information as we progress.

This month's KUDOS goes to
Billie Smith
Sandy Giannuzzi
and
Sylvia Gardner
for all their exceptional work in designing and getting the Hospital put together for the holidays.

ARC Education
Annual Regulatory Compliance Education & Risk Safety Module

For NEW VOLUNTEERS
Tuesdays: December 4 & 18 • 8:00-11:00 am
Location is East Campus, 3rd Floor IT Training Room opposite the elevator.

For ANNUAL VOLUNTEERS
Location is East Campus, 3rd Floor IT Training Room opposite the elevator.
Any Tuesday... 7:30 am - 11:30 am
Additionally, on a trial basis until the end of the year, the IT Training Room will remain open from 11:30 am until 3:00 pm for additional volunteers. From 3:00 pm until 6:30 pm, the test may be taken on paper in the cafeteria.

Outside Transportation volunteers can have their eyes checked any Tuesday when they take their annual test. Eye Tests are available between 8:00 am and 11:00 am at the Employee Health Care Office on the 3rd floor of the East Campus.
Jeannie Rogale our President

I hope you all had a HAPPY THANKSGIVING, filled with many good things to eat and drink.

The weekend of November 9-10 was the 4th Annual Hearts for Our Hospital Big Bike Challenge and Cycling Expo. Hosted by the Auxiliary Foundation and the Sumter Landing Bicycle Club, the event was held at the La Hacienda Recreation Center where over 356 cyclists rode on one of five routes (10, 20, 32, 64 or 100 miles) through Lake and Sumter Counties.

There was much to do in preparation for the weekend beginning on November 2nd, when eleven volunteers worked in the afternoon (and into the evening) to stuff 400 “goody bags” with items to give to the cyclists. This was followed by several man hours on November 6th to prepare registration packets for all of those who had preregistered and help the registration process go smooth. On Friday there was a Cycling Expo and Health Fair which featured cycling related vendors, as well as healthcare vendors from the hospital, and in the community. In addition cyclists could also pick up their registration packets.

On Saturday morning cyclists began arriving at 6:15 a.m. to enjoy a light breakfast and pick up their registration packets if they had not done so, and at 7:30 a.m. the first group of riders left out on their 100-mile trek. As each group returned to La Hacienda they were served lunch, drinks and even ice cream! They also enjoyed entertainment and beverages of beer/wine at the “Das Krankenhaus Biergarten” hosted by members of The Villages German Club. Overall many hours were put into this great event that was upbeat and enjoyed by all. It was a huge success in both fun and fundraising for the Foundation.

Christmas and Hanukkah are just around the corner. I’m sure you’ve all seen the decorations, beautiful trees and poinsettias that are placed throughout the hospital. The next time you will hear from me will be in the New Year of 2019.

WISHING YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY HOLIDAY AND NEW YEAR.
Sylvia Gardner, Gift Gallery is the wife of Dave Gardner. Dave was chair of our hospital foundation for several years. They began volunteering nine years ago when Dave was in the hospital after they were both so impressed with the care. Sylvia has worked in the Gift Gallery since the beginning and together with Billie Smith, Gift Gallery, Chair and Sandy Giannuzzi, Gift Gallery, they plan how the decorations will look and the decorating day. Sylvia has made many friends from various departments. She had such great things to say about the Gift Gallery Chair, "Billie works hard to create opportunities with all her volunteers to become friends and know each other to form strong friendships."

Vicki DeShaw, ER Ambassador, decorated an Israel tree in the 2nd floor waiting room. The tree is elegantly decorated in a beautiful blue and white with silver accents. There is a silver Menorah on the end table next to it.

Vicki had been an ER Nurse for 40 years. She recently had a stroke, but her passion for the ER compelled her to return to volunteering as soon as she could, "because I belong here!"

Nancy enjoys serving in the Cafe. She loves Peggy and Chris Kasprzak, co-Chairs of the Cafe. The sisters-in-law make working there so enjoyable. Nancy gets to meet so many people and seeing how much the Cafe lifts people's spirit. It has everything to do with the wonderful aroma of warm cookies. It's a happy place! Many of the staff purchase cookies to treat their employees. She really loves serving in the Cafe.
Vicki DeShaw and Nancy Enright (photo on the left) make it to the lunch buffet in the Cafeteria. Honeybaked Ham sandwiches, chips, cookies, and a pickle were brought for the volunteers. The meal was provided by the Foundation.

People were sitting at tables (photo on the right) talking together outside their usual serving positions. Sitting around one table was Sandra Jones, Donna Davis, Jeannie Rogale, Carol Emms, Margaret Heller, Terri Frangione and Sue Paden.

At another table volunteers were able to get to know Amanda Windsor (photo on the left). She is a young volunteer who graduated high school in 2017. Her parents moved to The Villages and she went off to school at Mount Holyoke in Massachusetts. She is planning to go back in January to continue her Neuroscience Degree and then go on to Premed. She has been volunteering in Patient Care all day on Tuesdays. She enjoys it and it has been a wonderful opportunity to gain experience.

This is just a small sample of the volunteers who came together to serve on Decorating Day. They each have their own story and motivation for giving their time, but mostly, they enjoy people and want to help them in any way they can. Thank you for your service!
CHRISTMAS IS COMING and YE OLDE THRIFT SHOPPE IS GETTING “FAT” with loads of home decorations, gifts, jewelry and clothes – especially clothes. The community has been very generous, giving us lots of gently worn or even brand-new clothing for both men and women. In fact, we had to hold a special, “Clothing Party,” to make sure we had everything sorted, sized and ready for our customers. Seventeen volunteers showed up on a Sunday to work their way through the backlog of clothing donations. It was a beautiful day for working outside and many of the participants got to meet volunteers from shifts other than their own. So don’t wait, stop by and see the incredible selection we have of party dresses, casual wear, cold weather items, shoes, purses and jewelry.  

(L to R) Karen Wydeveld, Janette Adams, Martha Miller, Judy Sheehan, Gail Repetti, Marge Ross, Judy Shepherd and Kathy Berlin

Come See Our Great Buys

Trees, ornaments, lights, wreaths, jewelry, books, gift bags, stuffed toys, linens, dishes for entertainment, gifts, party clothes, sweaters ...

50% off all Christmas items
In a meeting with ED volunteers on November 1, Lori DeForge, the director of the ED, reported that new processes in triage and patient movement and additional personnel have accounted for the improvement.

Streamlining the triage system now includes what is called the Super Fast Track, an effort to get a patient to see a doctor as soon as possible.

“This new effort has shaved off two hours of wait time already and has freed up 15 critical beds a day,” reported Susan Williams, Nursing Director, also at the meeting.

The Super Fast Track also keeps patients moving quickly from waiting room to treatment to either discharge or admittance.

Lori also reported that staff numbers have grown, including doctors, paramedics and at least 11 new nurses. She said that number could grow as the right people are found for openings.

Volunteers continue to help move patients and visitors through the often traumatic process of triage and treatment. Volunteers and staff explain the movement plan to patients and keep a tracking board updated at all times. Both Lori and Susan stressed, “We truly love our volunteers!”

Lori explained that irate patients are rare, but satisfaction is important. “Sometimes it’s just about sorting out why patients might be angry,” she said.

Even better news, Lori reported that the Joint Commission didn't find any “red light items,” except for some documentation issues, which are being addressed, “she said, “The Joint Commission said we were focusing on the right things.”

(Needed Good News continues on page 9)
Sudden onset of symptoms, dizziness, loss of vision, headache should not be ignored. Selina shared the meaning of **BE FAST** and it’s use in assessing a patient who may be having a stroke.

**Stroke Symptoms**

**BE FAST!!**

**B**= **B**ALANCE
- Is there a sudden loss of balance or coordination?

**E**= **E**YES
- Is there sudden blurred or double vision or sudden, persistent vision trouble?

**F**= **F**ACE
- Smile and see if one side of the face droops.

**A**= **A**RMS
- Raise both arms. Does one arm drop down?

**S**= **S**PEECH
- Say a short phrase and check for slurred or strange speech.

**T**= **T**IME to call 911.

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**KNOW STROKE SYMPTOMS**

**Call for an Ambulance Right Away**

**Selina Ancheta**, BSN, RN, SCRN / **System Stroke Coordinator, Central Florida Health**, was the guest speaker at the TVRH Volunteer Executive Committee in November.

Selina stated “Everything we do in the case of a stroke is very time sensitive and **stroke symptoms are a medical emergencies**”. TPA, a “clot buster” can be given within a certain timeframe and the stroke patients are evaluated for possible transfer to Shands. Turn around time from door to lab results is 45 minutes.

Transporting labs should be done as quickly as possible and it is vital that the lab knows this is a stroke emergency. Mechanical thrombectomy (removal of clot) can only be done at a stroke center such as Shands within a certain time frame. CT turn around time is 30 minutes and out the door in less than 2 hours.
If you have walked past the Gift Gallery lately, you have no doubt noticed that we are decorated for the soon to arrive Winter Holidays! Garland, ribbons, and lights festoon the outside of the Gift Gallery. Inside are beautiful decorations, especially for the holidays of Hanukkah and Christmas. Great gifts abound throughout the store, and with affordable prices, why shop anywhere else? The Gift Gallery can be your One Stop shopping center as we offer FREE gift wrap on store purchases.

Visit us and check out our plush toys that sing and dance, bringing laughs to all who watch them (just ask our volunteers who love playing with these toys). Warm shawls, robes and slippers, crystal like trees and angels that light up, new handbags, new jewelry including earrings, bracelets and necklaces for the ladies on your lists, gifts for Hanukkah, and much more.

Best of all, profits from our sales in the Gift Gallery go to the TVRH Auxiliary Foundation to provide more funds for TVRH.

And a Great Sale It Was! Thank you to all the team members, volunteers, and visitors who participated in our Gift Gallery Lobby Sale on Monday, November 5th. We truly appreciate your support! A special thank you to Supply Chain staff for their assistance in transporting the merchandise to our area.

Your thoughts, please! We would love to hear from you. Please share with us your ideas and thoughts on the type of merchandise you would like to see available in your gift store. Stop by for a quick visit and share your ideas with us. If you want to send us an e-mail, please send to bsmith@centflhealth.org.

No matter what holidays you will be celebrating, the Gift Gallery Volunteers wish you joy, peace, health and happiness!

BELKS at Spanish Springs is hosting the SEE'S CANDIES Annual TVRH Fundraiser!

Saturday, December 8th  OR
Saturday, December 15
between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Be sure to stop by the table inside Belks to purchase your favorite gifts for the holiday season!

If you ordered SEE’S CANDIES FROM THE HOSPITAL SALE it will be delivered to the cafeteria on December 3, 5, and 6 - 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Marie Aguilar  - cafe and Sheldon Morjoseph - supply chain AND candy fundraiser coordinator, selling See’s candy in annual fundraiser to benefit the Auxiliary Foundation.
**GET YOUR FLU SHOT**

**to protect patients, their families and each other**

The hospital’s vaccine schedule is at all the kiosks and begins in October. As in the past, the Hospital does not give the high dose recommended for Seniors.

If you receive the vaccine outside of the Hospital, please bring your documentation to the Day Captain’s office and they will submit to Employee Health for you to receive a sticker for your badge.

All volunteers who ONLY work at the Thrift Shop are exempt from this process, although everyone is encouraged to get a flu shot.

This year’s deadline for flu vaccination is Monday, December 31.

Bring proof of your shot to the Day Captain’s Office.

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**MEET OUR NEW Department Chairs**

**Jackie Sampson**  
*Imaging Transport*

Jackie has served all over the hospital. She has been a volunteer for about four years, and works four days a week in different departments, co-chairing in surgical waiting, two days in the Day Captain's office, and in the Foundation Office. She recently added Imaging Transport because she wanted to get more exercise. "It's not about what you put into serving that is important, it's what you get from it. Helping all the people is so important and rewarding.

**Sam Sica**  
*ASU/ADU/PACU, co-chair*

Sam and his wife moved to The Villages 10 years from ago from Illinois after spending three years looking for a place to retire. They picked The Villages because of all the activities available and of course, the weather. Sam enjoys bike riding, golfing and spend a lot of time at the health club. After being in the hospital and seeing how supportive the volunteers were he decided to give it a try. He's been a volunteer for about a year and a half and enjoys it very much. "I like working with the other volunteers but mostly enjoys supporting the nurses. As a volunteer, you see first hand how hard the nurses and staff work so, anything we can do to help and allow them to spend more time with patients is a good thing. I know they appreciate what we do”.

There is an opening for a **Chair for VPO**. Lou is presently handling that until the right person comes along. If you might be interested, or just want to know what this responsibility is about, contact Lou.

**Tony Saldano**  
*Musicians*

Tony Soldano recently signed up to volunteer and became an excellent fit as the chairperson for the Musicians Auxiliary of TVRH. He has a long and extensive background in professional music and music education.

Originally from New York City, He ran a dance band and was a studio musician in New York for many years. I moved to Florida in 1990 and became involved in Music Education and Music Ministry.

Tony recently retired from teaching music in Marion County Public Schools. However, is still active in professional music and music director of a local Catholic Church, He gives, piano and keyboard lessons in and around the Villages. "I enjoy playing in the lobby of the hospital every Thursday afternoon. As recently appointed chairperson of the Musicians Auxiliary, I look forward to keeping this wonderful volunteer opportunity going”.

**Jim Lemon**  
*Foundation Office Volunteer Staff*

Jim was president of the Auxiliary from 2014 to 2016 and is now serving on the Foundation board. He has a strong understanding of all the departments and is now Chairing the staff in the Foundation office answering the phones and helping them in any way they can.

*(New Chairs continued on page 12)*
Meet
PEGGY ROCHE
The New Writer for
The Hummingbird!
Written by her husband, John

Peggy comes from a suburb east of Pittsburgh, PA called Plum Boro. She has two sisters, Laura and Nancy, who both live in Pennsylvania. I didn't meet Peggy until we were in our early 20s. So I don't really know much about her times as a child and young adult.

She graduated from Slippery Rock State College (now a university) in 1972 and immediately went into teaching. She taught junior high school English and moonlighted as an adjunct at the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) well into the 90s.

In the early 80s she received her Masters in Media Communications from the University of Pittsburgh.

She finished her career as an English professor at California University of Pennsylvania. She retired in 2012. At the time of her retirement she was working on her doctorate.

Peggy and I married in 1974. We have two daughters, Morgan and Shannon. Morgan works in the motion picture industry in NYC as a locations manager. Shannon still lives in Pittsburgh and is a math teacher at Upper St. Clair High School.

We moved to The Villages in 2015 after I retired. Peg loves to golf and do water aerobics. She was once an avid tennis player until her knees grounded her. She is on our neighborhood (Manatee unit 217) social committee and is a force in putting together our monthly social programs (and for volunteering me for stuff).

Her bucket list has only one item: to see all 50 states. After our two week journey to New England this past August, she now has 30 pins on her wall map of the U.S.A. We’re planning on a handful of pins from the Northwest next summer.

Peggy is nearing 200 hours volunteering in the Emergency Room on Saturday mornings.

Carol Emms.
ASU/PACU/ADU, co-chair

Carol and her husband retired in 2016 and moved from mid-state New York.

They live in the Village of Belle Aire. They became volunteers in August 2018 because they wanted to give back to the beautiful community they live in. Carol’s husband volunteers at the hospital as a outside transporter.
The entire Executive Committee was shocked and saddened to hear that Pat Kronk has resigned as Chair for the Musicians. Pat was not only a conscientious Chair, she was a remarkable music talent.

Wherever she and her husband, Howard Glitt, played with Hershal Chapman as a trio the atmosphere was filled with delightful music. Over the years, they graciously played at luncheons, Galas, and special events. Although officially she only has 3,000 hours since becoming an Auxiliary member. She has probably played twice that much if you would include the years before they were merged into the Auxiliary.

Pat started as a musician in 2007, before the group was formally incorporated into the Auxiliary. She took over as Chair from Sara Kallioinen because she didn’t want to see the music program fade away.

She took on the task of officially merging the musicians into the Auxiliary in 2013 under Jim Lemon and since then the program has expanded to almost 50 musicians playing in the main lobby, ACS lobby and Rehab unit. These musicians share their incredible talent to create a warm welcome to visitors, and to provide soothing music to calm worried hearts of patients and family members.

She wants her department to know …

“It has been my honor to know each of you.

I wish you well.
I wish you good health.
I wish you happy moments...lots and lots of happy moments.

And I wish you continued soothing, comforting, wonderful music in your forever soul.”
MAJOR FOUNDATION HAPPENINGS

GIVING

• For fiscal year 2017-2018 over $1 million dollars was given to The Villages® Regional Hospital.

• Four million + dollars in bequests have been received.

• In 2018, Room Naming Sponsorships have increased from 76-89 resulting in donations of more than four million dollars in cash and pledges. If sponsored, the total value of all rooms exceeds 16 million dollars.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS

• Our Partner/Sponsor Program increased from 36 to 62 members, a 42% increase over last year.

• Participation in the Royal Palm Program has increased from 12 to 88 members since inception in 2013.

• To date 18 members participate in the Touchstone Society Program.

RENOVATIONS & REVITALIZATIONS

• The Gift Gallery and Cafe have experienced dramatic growth since expanding in 2016. In addition, nine annual lobby sales generated over $15,000.

• Plans for renovation and expansion are underway for land purchased next to the Ye Olde Thrift Shop in 2017. The plans will take place over the next two years to improve retail space and accommodate storage needs.

• The Sharon L. Morse Celebration Garden continues to be an attraction to our community. More than 1,707 commemorative bricks have been sold and 2,997 are available to sell.

To learn more or to become involved in the Auxiliary, the Foundation, or to schedule a tour of the hospital, call or visit our office at:

The Villages® Regional Hospital Auxiliary Foundation
1501 N US Highway 441, Suite 1829
The Villages, FL 32159 • Phone:(352) 751-8871 • Fax: (352) 751-8872

Patient Navigator: (352) 751-8173 Email: TVRHAF@centflhealth.org
Website: www.tvrhfoundation.org

(Major Foundation Happenings continue on page 15)
MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

• In 2018, we continued with a series of educational seminars highlighting our Foundation Partners. Programs included topics such as healthcare related, wealth management, long term care and end-of-life decisions.

• Our scholarship program began in 2015 and continues to provide over $100,000 annually to hospital team members and high school seniors. Currently we have 20 Scholarship Sponsors. Since its inception we have awarded over $317,000 to benefit 3 I high school students and 44 team members pursuing medically related studies. This year a mentoring program will be implemented.

• Hospital tours are conducted on a regular basis. In 2017, 80 tours were given to 302 individuals.

• Distribution of our quarterly newsletter, which was first published in October 2014, has grown to over 48 locations throughout The Villages.

• Informative presentations about The Villages Regional Hospital are held as requested. To date, we have addressed more than 11,000 people.

• Our Patient Care Committee, with a budget of $100,000 plus, most recently approved the purchase of a SimMan 3G Mannequin to provide advanced educational training for clinical staff through the "Support Our Workforce" Program.

FUND RAISING EVENTS

• The annual Hearts for Our Hospital Gala, now in its 12th year, continues to be the premier black tie event in The Villages.

• With the goal of 500 riders in 2018, our cycling event continues to increase in revenue and could become a $100,000 fund raiser within the next year.

• We have four event partners who hold annual events for the Foundation to assist in our fundraising efforts.

PARTNERING WITH THE AUXILIARY

• Over the past five years, Auxiliary membership increased from 650 to more than 900 members strong, and serve in 41 areas/departments within the hospital.

• In 2018, volunteers created a cost savings of $3,946,969 for the hospital by providing over 169,000 hours of service.

• Auxiliary members participated in educating patients on patient satisfaction questionnaires - gathering feedback on patient experience for corrective action as needed.
FOUNDATION EVENTS

The 13th Annual Hearts for Our Hospital Gala to be held Saturday, February 9, 2019 at the Savannah Center, is themed “Serengeti Sunset,” and promises to be an event to remember! Friends of TVRH Auxiliary Foundation will soon embark on an expedition to Africa to experience the beauty and wonder of the “Serengeti Sunset” as they come together to raise funds for the 13th Annual Hearts for Our Hospital Gala, and revel in the surprises of the Serengeti.

This exciting evening, is a premier black tie event in The Villages, and will be held at the Savannah Center. Every year the guests are impressed with the decor, fine dining and the silent and live auction items. Johnny Wild and The Delights, a popular band in The Villages, will be providing the musical entertainment. While enjoying a special night to remember, everyone attending will be helping the Auxiliary Foundation in its mission to support The Villages® Regional Hospital.

For more information, including how to purchase tickets, please contact Schanda Strawder at The Villages® Regional Hospital Auxiliary Foundation office at (352) 751-8871.

Happy Holidays!

Wishing you a joyous Holiday Season and a most prosperous and healthy New Year.
In case you missed this article in the Daily News on November 17, 2018

Top of the News
INSIDE THE ISSUES SHAPING OUR COMMUNITY

Hospital Wins Race For Efficiency in ER
PATIENTS’ WAIT TIMES IMPROVE AT VILLAGES REGIONAL

By CIARA VARONE: Daily Sun Senior Writer

Patients should check with primary care doctors for symptoms that are concerning but not severe enough to call 911. Patients can build relationships with primary care providers to manage chronic conditions over time. Americans made 990.8 million visits to primary care offices in 2015, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Between 100 and 125 patients enter The Villages Regional Hospital’s emergency department every day, averaging 150 during peak season. In an effort to reduce wait times for a growing patient load, the hospital brought in a consulting firm this year to find ways of streamlining ER care processes. “We’re one of the highest acuity ERs in the country, meaning our patients are sicker,” said Dr. Jeremy Spry, ER director at TVRH. “It’s always been a work in process trying to figure out what we can do better.” Wait times are improving, according to the most recent data from TVRH. For September 2018, the average wait time for patients to be seen by a physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant was 12 minutes.

That’s compared to the 49-minute average available from medicare.gov, which is calculated using data from April 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017.

The average wait time for patients to be admitted from the time of their arrival was 275 minutes, compared to the 454-minute average from the April 2016 through March 2017 period.

To help decompress the ER, leading to faster treatment for patients with emergencies, TVRH has implemented a new system for patients with minor illnesses.

Those patients are taken to a separate treatment area, called SuperTrack.

For September 2018, the average total time from registration to discharge for those patients was reduced to 227 minutes from the previously reported 246-minute total time.

The overall goal is to eventually reduce that time to less than two hours, according to a statement from the hospital.

Don Henderson, president and CEO of Central Florida Health, TVRH’s nonprofit parent, asks residents to contact him with concerns about the hospital’s care by emailing contactceo@centflhealth.org.

Patients can do their part to help the hospital best utilize resources by determining if their condition warrants a visit to the emergency room.

“You want to find the right spot for your symptoms,” Spry said.

The ER is the best fit for patients with serious traumatic injuries, symptoms of stroke, chest pain and sepsis.

Spry said the ER sees patients with common colds, minor sprains and rashes who could find effective treatment faster outside the department.

With flu season underway, however, patients with influenza symptoms should be more cautious, he said.

More than 80,000 people died from flu last season, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates.

“Overall, the community does a pretty good job at separating themselves,” Spry said.

To facilitate medical care, Spry urges patients to communicate with their primary care providers.

For snowbirds, that means finding a local doctor they can go to when issues arise.

“Time is of the essence with the elderly,” Cloukey said. “Seniors are at heightened risk for severe complications from routine illnesses,” she said.

“Their organs are aged and some medical states, such as dehydration, low-grade fever or diarrhea, can overwhelm an elderly system very quickly,” Cloukey said. “Multi-organ failure can occur in days in the elderly.”

“Many conditions can be effectively treated by a primary care provider, she said, if patients seek treatment early on.”

“Time is of the essence with the elderly,” Cloukey said. “As a primary care physician, reaching out to me earlier means I have a better fighting chance to help you avoid urgent care or emergency room visits, which can be costly and take up a lot time.”

She encourages seniors to partner with their physician to take a proactive approach to maintaining health.

“Seek out care for prevention, learn about your risks and what you can do to lower them,” Cloukey said.

Ciara Varone is a senior writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5395, or ciara.varone@thevillagesmedia.com.