

Happenings



SUMMER
2014



**Congratulations
to our amazing
staff for being
selected for
Best Places to
Work in Indiana
for the 4th
consecutive
year!**



2014 WOMEN of Influence

Trudy Rupska



CEO, VNA Homecare and Hospice of the Wabash Valley

Seated in her pleasant but modest office on Eighth Avenue, Trudy Rupska is professional without being aloof. She is friendly and warm, but clearly knows her stuff and is serious and passionate about her role as a health care provider.

“I do what I do because I like what I do,” Rupska said smiling.

What Rupska does is manage Visiting Nurse Association Homecare and Hospice of the Wabash Valley, making her responsible for a large staff of nurses, clinical and administrative staff who provide care for hundreds of at-home patients each year, including many facing end-of-life challenges.

It’s a big job, but Rupska says her mission remains a simple one: To make a positive difference in health care in the Wabash Valley. That’s what she has been doing as a nurse and leader at Union Hospital and later at VNA/Hospice for more than 30 years.

Rupska is “truly deserving” of being named a Woman of Influence, said Terri Hill, a vice president with Union Hospital in Clinton.

“I’ve worked with her for over 35 years, and she is extremely devoted not only to nursing and health care but also to her community,” said Hill, a 2013 Woman of Influence, who spoke recently with the Tribune-Star. As a healthcare provider Rupska is committed to treating the “whole person- physically, emotionally, and spiritually,” Hill said. “She’s truly committed to that.”

Rupska is also passionate about her activities outside her profession. She has been active in the Indiana Special Olympics for years, and is currently board president for Happiness Bag, a United Way agency that provides recreational and educational programs and services to individuals with mental and/or physical disabilities in the Wabash Valley.

“Trudy started as a volunteer for Happiness Bag more than a decade ago and eventually got lured onto the board,” Jodi Moan, executive director of the organization told the Tribune-Star. And the Happiness Bag board of directors is definitely a “working board,” Moan added, meaning Rupska and other board members must get actively involved in helping the organization.

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Rupska Continued..

Rupska volunteers with Happiness Bag's large bowling program and has also helped out at track meets. She also joyfully interacts with Happiness Bag's clients, she said of Rupska.

"She's one of those people that you wish you had 20 more of," Moan said.

The health care industry has faced a tidal wave of changes in recent years and Rupska, when asked of what she is proud, said managing those changes is at the top of the list. Her goal as leader of VNA/Hospice has been to deal with the financial and other challenges presented in recent years while keeping her agencies focused on providing caring health care services.

"We've remained a caring organization while remembering we face a [financial] bottom line," she said.

Greg Gibson, president of the VNA/Hospice board of directors, appreciates the leadership Rupska has provided. "Trudy led a reorganization of the two agencies which has helped to preserve the important services they provide to the Wabash Valley," Gibson wrote in one of several nomination letters to the Women of Influence selection committee on Rupska's behalf. "She brought both agencies back to profitability while offering services to patients regardless of their ability to pay," he wrote.

Under Rupska's leadership, VNA/Hospice has also worked to achieve high levels of employee satisfaction. For each of the past four years, the organization has been named one of the "Best Places to Work in Indiana" in an employee survey process sponsored by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce.

Rupska schedules monthly staff meetings and believes in keeping her employees aware of the financial status of their agencies. That allows them to feel informed and a part of the decision-making process, she said.

As a leader and mentor, Rupska believes there are no mistakes that cannot be corrected. She believes in education (and reeducation, if needed) as opposed to blame, she said. "I do try to hold myself and other individuals responsible for our actions, but I also want to make sure that others see that I am in there with them," she said.

As she did during her tenure at Union Hospital, Rupska helped Happiness Bag become accredited with the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), Moan said, adding that's a "huge" achievement, very important to any health-care organization involved in rehabilitation work.

"She's a phenomenal person," Moan said. Rupska has enjoyed a successful career, including nearly two decades in leadership positions at Union Hospital where she was program manager of the hospital's acute care rehabilitation unit and system director of post-acute care services. She took a leadership post at VNA/Hospice in 2004 and has never looked back.

Also in 2004, then-Gov. Joe Kernan appointed Rupska to a state task force on stroke prevention. She also served as chairwoman of the Indiana Hospital Association Rehabilitation Task Force from 2001 to 2009.

A lifelong resident of Terre Haute, Rupska has been married to James A. Rupska, a retiree of Eli Lilly, for the past 37 years. They have three sons and three grandsons. Family is extremely important to Rupska, she said, sitting amidst numerous family photos on the walls of her office

In 2010, Rupska received the Baur Award from the Union Hospital Foundation, an award recognizing exceptional contributions to improve patient care and other aspects of service to the hospital and the community. She is a three-time recipient of the Standards of Excellence Leadership during her time at Union Hospital and also received the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing excellence in nursing leadership award in 2003.

- **Thank you to Arther Foulkes of the Tribune-Star for writing this piece on Trudy Rupska**

Going Green and Saving Money!

If you would like to receive our newsletter by email, please advise us to change your mailing status to "email only" by emailing:

Tracy Rippey at:
trippy@uhhg.org



27th ANNUAL TULIP FUND RAISER – A HUGE SUCCESS!



Photo Courtesy of Tracy Rippy

Hospice of the Wabash Valley hosted our 27th Annual Tulip Fund Raiser on April 23, 2014. Many thanks go out to everyone who helped make this year's tulip fund raiser a success!

We sold more than 1800 tulip bouquets this year, which is more than in the past two years. Tulip day dawned beautiful and our volunteers were up and ready, after donuts and coffee, to get on the road for deliveries. We have already received calls from individuals who want to order tulip bouquets for 2015!

A successful fund raiser does not just happen. It takes a lot of hard work to advertise the fund raiser, get order forms out to the public, track the orders once in, set up the routes (this year we had 38 routes), put the tulips together at the Tulip Company on the evening before the deliveries, load them on the day of the fund raiser, get them to the pick-up site, sort them properly so that the route drivers can pick up their orders, deliver tulips to be sold at area businesses, set up sales in the VNA/Hospice of the Wabash Valley office, and, later in the day, return all of the empty crates and buckets to the pick-up site! Whew!

A sincere thank you goes to Leota Ehm, our office volunteer of 13+ years, who coordinated all of the above responsibilities. In addition, we must thank our Board members, staff members, our volunteers, route drivers, area businesses and Union Hospital who either assisted in the delivery of the tulips or who allowed us to sell the tulip bouquets at their business location.

A Special Thank You to Businesses Who Helped to Make Tulips a Success:

- Baesler's Market
- Fox Canteen
- Edward Jones- Brazil
- First Financial Maintenance Department
- Grand Traverse Pie Company
- Kiwanis of Terre Haute
- Signature Healthcare
- Sullivan Rotary Club
- Union Hospital
- Union Hospital - Clinton
- WTHI - TV
- WTWO

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new and
improved
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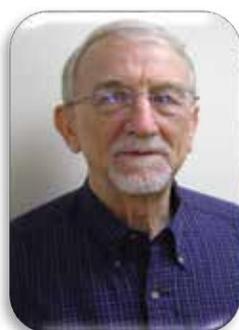


Retirement News

“In retirement, every day is Boss Day and every day is Employee Appreciation Day”

We are regretfully extending a warm farewell to two individuals who have come to mean so much to Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice of the Wabash Valley and all of those patients and caregivers whose lives were touched by these two, Jack Brockman, Bereavement Coordinator, and Leota Ehm, Volunteer.

Jack Brockman



John “Jack” Brockman joined the staff of Visiting Nurse Association/Hospice of the Wabash Valley on June 16, 2009 as our Bereavement Coordinator after serving in a volunteer role for almost one year. Jack retired from our agency on June 30th. Before joining us, Jack had served as Pastor for more than 42 years. For 19 of those years he has served in local churches. Jack began several bereavement groups in our five-county area and he is known as a very compassionate, caring and nurturing individual. Jack can walk into any room and immediately his presence changes the atmosphere to one of calmness and comfort. He has promised that he will visit us from time to time and we will certainly look forward to those visits!!

Leota Ehm



In February, 2001 we met Leota Ehm, R.N., who had retired in May, 2000 from her role as the Chairperson of the Practical Nursing Program at Ivy Tech State College. She was seeking a volunteer position in a medical organization that had great visibility and a great reputation for excellent patient care. Could we use her services, she asked? Could we ever!!! Leota has since been a faithful, committed office volunteer for 13 years. Now she and her husband, Dennis, are relocating to the Indianapolis towards the end of July to be closer to family. Leota has contributed more than 3,000 hours to our agency and, among other activities, was the person most responsible for the success of our tulip fund raiser each year! She coordinated ALL of the volunteer’s duties for the tulip fund raiser, she made certain that each order was processed quickly and accurately and that all deliveries were set up through her careful routing, using a computer program she developed of our service area. Leota, it is so difficult to say goodbye to you! We will forever be grateful for the many hours of service you gave to us. Please come and visit us often!!

A Warm Welcome

goes to... Rev. Neva McFarland



Concurrent with our fond farewell to Jack Brockman, our Bereavement Coordinator of many years, we are thrilled to welcome Neva McFarland to the role of Bereavement Coordinator. Many of you know Neva from Union Hospital. We have worked with her in a peripheral capacity for several years in her former full time position of Patient Representative Coordinator in the Chaplain's Office at Union Hospital. About the same time Neva was contemplating retirement from Union Hospital and considering a part-time position in the community so that she and her husband could spend more time with their grandchildren, the part-time Bereavement Coordinator position became available within our agency. Neva has a Master of Pastoral Counseling from Olivet Nazarene University and had been with Union Hospital since 1997 providing compassion and comfort to patients and their family members facing devastating medical news or prognosis. Prior to her employment at Union Hospital, Neva worked as the In-home Director for Westminster Village and prior to that as Director of Case Management with Area 7 Agency on Aging. Neva joined us on June 18th. We are fortunate to have her on our staff.

Volunteer Spotlight

Together We Make the Ordinary EXTRAORDINARY!

We are pleased to announce that the following volunteers completed the Volunteer Education/Training Program on April 9th for Hospice of the Wabash Valley!



Marvin Brown, an area Chaplain and volunteer for many years in the Wabash Valley, now sees patients within their homes to provide respite and emotional support and companionship;



Suzanne Eisenberger has worked as an office volunteer since September of last year and has now added patient respite, emotional support and companionship to her volunteer role:



Caroline Unger, community supporter and volunteer, gives her time to provide office support, assists and participates in fundraising and sits with patients in their home or facility.



Amy Schneider, a Union Hospital employee, provides office and patient support as well as assists and participates in fundraising during evenings and weekends;



Heidi Scank from Happiness Bag volunteers her time assisting with projects within our Medical Records Department;

Hospice of the Wabash Valley Receives Donation from Roselawn Funeral Home & Memorial Park.

Hospice of the Wabash Valley would like to express our sincere appreciation for a generous donation from Roselawn Funeral Home & Memorial Park in the amount of \$2,283.52.

This donation was raised through the Lights for Loved Ones Tree Lighting Ceremony. The Lights for Loved Ones program allows those who have lost a loved one to reflect and remember during the holiday season. Ornaments named in the memory of loved ones are sold for a minimum donation of \$1 and displayed during the annual tree lighting ceremony in December.

This year Roselawn Funeral Home and Memorial Park raised \$1,141.76 in donations. They generously matched the contributions and donated all the proceeds to Hospice of the Wabash Valley.

Thank you for your donation!



Peggy Wesley-Fitzthum, of Roselawn Funeral Home, presents Lynn Morales, of VNA/Hospice, with a donation check made possible through contributions to Lights for Loved Ones Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Run & Remember

THE CAUSE. THE COURSE.

Hospice of the Wabash Valley

SAVE THE DATE!

OCTOBER 4TH, 2014



LaVern Gibson Championship Cross Country Course

5K & 10K



Memorials

Starting Feb. 1, 2014
through May 31, 2014

In Memory of John Arnold

Louise Arnold
Russell & Carol Arnold
Catherine Bailey
Luellen Mitchell
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Pounds

In Memory of Dr. William Bannon

William Welch

In Memory of Chris Brunning

Robert & Teresa Schickel
K.A. & V.R. Davis
Lorri Nikki Voltmer
Herman & Denise White

In Memory of Daniel Budd

Eugenia Parker
Lynda Strange

In Memory of Dorothy Collins

Mr. & Mrs. English
Linda & James Goy

In Memory of Anna Dinkel

Jerry & Claudia Boyd
Ralph & Debby Conn
Mary E. Dinkel
Kimberly Doti
Gibson Services Co.
Colleen Lee
Dr Rodney McDonald
Dick & Pam Morley
Chuck & Susie Overpeck
Christopher Phegley
Pro Kids, Inc.
Marilyn "Susie" Reid
SMC, Inc.
Vigo County School Bus Drivers Association
Susan G. Welch

In Memory of Florence Eveland

Marion M. Eveland

In Memory of Catherine (Betty) Gauer

Esther Pfister

In Memory of Gary L. Griffith

Shelby Griffith

In Memory of Ron Grindle

Becky Grindle

In Memory of John Hayden

Timothy Bartley
John & Marilyn Daniel

Richard & Carol Jinbo
Larry A King Sr
Ida Taylor

In Memory of Betty Helt

Sony DADC
Friends of Ernie Adams
Debbie Vencel

In Memory of Dennis Hendrix

Judith Lemmons

In Memory of Robert G. Jones

Mike & Terri Bauer

In Memory of Kip Judson

George & Wilma Wooten

In Memory of Dennis Judy

William Somerville

In Memory of Patrick Kelly

Kenny & Margie Wooden

In Memory of Walter Kindrick

Billye & Alan Borders
Karen Davis
Tricia, Tara, Marilyn, Harry, Burton Partridge &
Windle Families
Elease Thiemann
Janet Wetzel
Annette Wisniewski
Durbin & Barbara Woodson

In Memory of Jean Knotts

Tom & Laurice Newlin

In Memory of Paul Marietta

Mark Marietta

In Memory of Rose Mary Marietta

Mark Marietta

In Memory of Dwight Miller

Brian and Elisa Byrer

In Memory of George Neal

Earl Pennington
Harry and Rosaline Secret
Mike & Lillie Sekerak

In Memory of Mary M. Nickless

DNA Harrison Enterprises DBA Comfort Keepers
Gill & Rita Garman
M. J. Miller
Antoniette Nickless

In Memory of Billy Paul Pierson

Tom & Laurice Newlin

In Memory of Phillip Porter

Jean Bickett, Randy & Brenda Hash & Family
Rick Klutzke
Martin Lathrop

Jimmy Lunsford
Dale & Nancy McKee
Grace L. Mitchell
James & Joy Wittenauer

In Memory of Ruth Ann Purcell

Clark & Carol Lohse

In Memory of Thomas Rayce

Donald Lee Mercer

In Memory of Virginia Rogers

Martha G Bowsher
Sally Curley
David and Alice Fuller
Frank & Barbara Hoffman
Jonathan & Susan Loyd
Jim & Trudy Rupska
Fraser & Dian Snowden
Susan C. Snowden

In Memory of Paul Sanders

James Lantz

In Memory of Juanita Schonert

Greg & Betty Lewis

In Memory of Margaret Spence

William C and Anna Louise Myers

In Memory of Nola Spence

William C and Anna Louise Myers

In Memory of Will Spence

William C and Anna Louise Myers

In Memory of Francis Tate

Marcia & John Stievenart
The Estate of Frances Tate
Sandra & Harold Wilken
Diane & Terry Wright

In Memory of Hershel Thurmond

Lynda Strange

In Memory of James "Wallace" Elder

Lost Creek Elementary School
Ron & Donna Sampson

In Memory of Betty Walter

Peggy M Parker

In Memory of Ada Whitaker

Nancee Watson

In Memory of Ray A. Winnett

Mandi & Charles Finn
Stanley & Tina Williams
Sandra Winnett

In Memory of Lenny Zwerner

Sue & Jim Bondi
Pat (Howell) Thorlton

**Your Donation is of vital significance to the financial support of
Hospice of the Wabash Valley and Visiting Nurse Association.**

It is helpful to us at this time of year if you would consider sending your 2014 Donation in response to this newsletter. Your support is very much appreciated.

Please Check:

- PARTNER (\$1,000 or more) Name: _____
 - ASSOCIATE (\$500 - \$999) Address: _____
 - PATRON (\$100 - \$499) _____
 - FRIEND (\$25 - \$99) _____
- Phone: _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____

You may designate your donation to one of the following programs:

- Hospice Bereavement Program
- Indigent Program - Hospice & VNA

You may also designate your donation in honor of or in memory of a friend or loved one. Please be specific.

_____ In honor of _____

_____ In memory of _____

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 - 7... Summer Memorials

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