

Ideas for Hospital Program toward yearend report

Volunteer – call the VA facility or requirements to become a volunteer and options available within the facility for volunteering.

- ❖ Volunteering is a very rewarding experience in Hospitals, Nursing homes, Hoptels, Fisher House, Greenhouse, Community through the CVSCO, Domiciliary, Homeless vets, VA and non-VA medical centers, Palliative Care, and Clinics. Volunteering offers many opportunities and varying types of duties depending on the facility to suit different ages and abilities.
- ❖ **Please volunteer** - donate your time at the VA clinics, VA Medical centers, veteran nursing homes, etc. To volunteer (each facility has their own volunteer policies and you would have to check with the facility) offer up 1 hour, 2 hours, one day a week, couple hours month etc.
 - **Volunteers can:**
 - Make out menus for oncology veterans
 - Making popcorn (VA need tall volunteers to place the popcorn in the top part of the larger popcorn makers).
 - Serve in the entrance Free Coffee and doughnuts or cookies supplied by volunteer department
 - Escort service in hospital (escorting veterans room the nursing floors to PT, OT dental clinic, speech, etc.)
 - Palliative care “No veteran dies alone” (new program) where no veteran dies alone (volunteers are on a call list for a veteran with no family. The volunteer is called at any time to come in and sit with the veteran [2 hrs] if family out of town, or veteran with no family, or spouse is sick and cannot stay with a loved one etc. You are not required at the time of call to come if unable. The VA calls the next person on the list until find a volunteer to come in.
 - Placing flags on graves; or removing flags at national cemetery
 - Red Vest ambassador greet the veteran as they come into the facility and make sure veterans get to their appointment on time, and find the appointment, help with their needs within the facility. This is a new program throughout all VA facilities to help veterans reach their destination within the facility. “Can I help you” logo on back of vest.
 - Veterans readily seek out the red vest ambassadors to talk to, help guide to their destination
 - Listen to their stories
 - Volunteer as a Feeders within the facility at mealtime etc.
 - Assist transport to outings from the facility to for ex. Brewers games, theatres, fairs, etc.
 - Assist transport of veterans to events on the VA grounds.
 - Ask to attend events at your local VA hospital or clinics to see what is involved before you decide to volunteer
 - Help a veteran develop a “**Hope box**” which is a box with items of support to the veteran such as Family pictures, letters, items that are personal for him/her as a way to educate to prepare him/her when go home to prevent suicide.
 - **Encourage the veteran voices writing project** for veteran to express himself/herself by utilizing therapeutic writing to express themselves and communicate (manages PTSD symptoms and reduce risk of suicide).
 - Assure support for the Hospital Program by communicating to VFW Auxiliary members the importance of hospital work.

- Recruit hospital volunteers among: members of auxiliary at meetings, or word of mouth, members of your community, retirees whether veteran or non-veteran may want to volunteer to share a part of them to the Veteran for what they gave to us.

❖ **Search the following sites** and see if able to volunteer is some aspect

- **Veterans Voices (VVWP) Veterans Voices Writing Project:** <http://www.veteransvoices.org>
 - assist in writing projects or specifics to the site
 - Listen to the veteran's stories etc.
- Veteran and Military Suicide Awareness and Prevention
SUPPORT & RESOURCES:
 - Veterans Crisis Line: Call: 1.800.273.8255 press 1; Text: 83855;
 - Chat: www.veteranscrisisline.net
 - Listen to the veteran's stories etc.
- Teardrop on WI VFW Department Auxiliary website: www.wivfwaux.org
- Help Heal Veterans (Therapeutic Craft Kits): www.healvets.org
 - Help Heal Veterans has provided free therapeutic arts and crafts kits to hospitalized and homebound veterans for generations. These craft kits help injured and recuperating veterans improve fine motor skills, cognitive functioning, manage stress and substance abuse, cope with symptoms of PTSD and TBI (traumatic brain injury), while also improving their sense of self-esteem and overall physical and mental health. **Volunteer to help with therapeutic arts and crafts.**
 - The kits range in categories including woodworking, leather, models, and a variety of needlecrafts, paint-by-numbers and veterans love it because they feel independent and like they can make decisions.
- Patients Like Me: www.patientslikeme.com/join/vfw
 - If volunteer as a red vest ambassador at the VA. Veteran like to tell stories. Review the site
- VA OFFICE OF RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT:
 - Veterans' health and wellbeing has expanded in recent years
 - Qualified investigators use their scientific knowledge to develop care solutions for our Veterans
 - Get your fact sheet at www.research.va.gov IBS, HIV, telehealth, diabetes, continuity of care, it talks about antibiotics, microvascular disease which leads to leg amputations (Korean vets), combat victims with mental health issues later in life, etc. **Volunteer to help print fact sheets**

❖ **Volunteer at events:**

1. **July 20 in Union Grove** is Vets program day near Mauer Hall area, celebrate with picnic etc.
2. **August 5th start the week's events in Tomah** – volunteers needed (**see attached specifics**)
3. **August 15th – Hospital tour at Minneapolis VA Medical center**
4. **King day August 17** - volunteers needed! Music at 1030, later ice cream and soda, Parade of checks, Bingo in afternoon at 1:30PM

AUXILIARY PROJECTS (if unable to volunteer at a facility)

❖ Sewing for veteran's needs:

- w/c bags
- catheter bags
- lap covers
- bed covers (cover from waist down) for end of life/ palliative care
- pillow cases (wide enough to fit the pillow)
- walker bags

❖ Offer to purchase worn rubber bottoms and/or sliders for walkers at the hospital. **The projects are Endless.**

❖ **Donations:** money (\$5, \$10, \$15) to help these veterans' or as much as you are able. Make check out to VFWA – WI and be sure to earmark specifically where the money is to be donated. Mail to Lenore Otto 1383 W Wisconsin Ave Oconomowoc, WI 53066

❖ Purchase clothing which is needed in various sizes; **concentrate on the larger sizes** XI, 2XL, 3XL (socks, underwear, sweat shirts, T shirts, shoes – men's and women's) Wish lists will be available in the future for the various facilities. Ask auxiliary members to go to the VA once a month, every other month, once a year to donate items. Items can be purchased on sale at dollar store, Walmart (no used items).

1. Auxiliaries can have **fund raisers** to:

- Donate money, purchase clothes, sew, make cards of computer or with construction paper or colorful computer paper (show your creativity) & decorate gift bags, involve girl/boy scouts/community youth, go to schools and ask them to make cards, or in their art classes etc.
- One auxiliary placed a candy bar in each finger of plastic glove and in the palm placed a zip lock back of popcorn (or popcorn ball) and tied the end. Auxiliaries could decorate the gloves for the occasion (Easter bunny ears, etc.) and/or write a note of "Thank you for your service" on the other side of the glove. You may need to ask if veteran has a diet restriction.
- Obtain small decorative plastic bags or small paper bags and the auxiliaries can purchase at a dollar store or Walmart small bibles, pens, pencils, note pad, calendar and place in the bags as gifts.
- Pinterest has great ideas for inexpensive gifts.
- Raise funds for hospital work. Auxiliaries have brat fry's, fish fry's, craft fair of which you could do a 70/30, 60/40 split etc.
- **S W A P CORNER (Other examples for Auxiliaries if unable to volunteer)**
Share Wonderful Auxiliary Projects During these hot days of summer, **observe and be aware of your Hospital and Clinics' needs.**
 - For example: A Hospital was having a problem with their water fountains and the Auxiliary stepped up and provided bottle water to this Hospital and contacted their State Congressman about the problem. This is only one of many ways Auxiliaries can help!