

CONNECTIONS

IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF OUR REGIONAL COMMUNITY



June 2021

Service Auxiliary continues its support for hospital

COVID-19 may have slowed the Salina Regional Service Auxiliary down in 2020, but the organization still pledged \$45,000 in support for patients, families and employees at Salina Regional Health Center and programs and services of the Salina Regional Health Foundation despite the pandemic.

Now in 2021 the organization is looking to return

to normal. The Service Auxiliary supports a number of initiatives including the Rebecca A. Morrison House, Olivia's Playground, health care scholarship program and continual enhancements to the patient and family experience at the hospital. Successful fall and spring rummage sales and hospital Gift Shop proceeds have been important recent fundraisers for the organization. The Service Auxiliary hopes to bring back other events like its linen, book and jewelry sales and other fundraising efforts in the near future.

"We have a tremendous board that has a lot of fun and is dedicated to supporting the patients, families and employees at Salina Regional Health Center," said Emma Doherty, Service Auxiliary board president.

There are currently 154 members of the Services Auxiliary. Members pay annual dues of \$10 and volunteer their time and talent to support Service Auxiliary activities in addition to enjoying the group's social opportunities. For more information on how to become a member contact Bonnie Anderson by calling 785-827-3385.

"Many of our members have been a patient at the hospital or have had family members who were patients, and they are happy to support the organization and all the people it serves," Doherty said.



Service Auxiliary board members hosted a spring conference with other hospital auxiliaries from around the region in Salina. Annual membership dues for the Service Auxiliary are only \$10 and lifetime memberships are \$250.

Cancer patient grateful for Morrison House

Genny and Leonard Rajhes of Kensington, in western Smith County, had never heard of the Rebecca A. Morrison House until they saw a sign with information about the hospitality house while at the Tammy Walker Cancer Center waiting for one of Leonard's first appointments as he began treatment for lymphoma.

"We're farmers who have been healthy all of our lives," Genny Rajhes said. "So a cancer diagnosis is a shock to us. We asked the Cancer Center staff for more information about the house and they got us in touch with Lisa Hoffman (Morrison House Manager)."

Kensington is over two hours away from Salina and having a place to stay nearby was a "blessing," Genny said.

"In addition to providing a beautiful home to stay in, the staff has been so kind and generous," Genny said. "This is a huge safety net for people in need of medical care in Salina who are from out of town."

The Morrison House is a home away from home for loved ones of patients at Salina Regional Health Center from outside Salina. The home also serves outpatients who are undergoing treatment at the Tammy Walker Cancer Center.

There is no charge for guests who stay at the Morrison House. The service is supported entirely by donations.

For more information about the Morrison House, or to learn how you can help support the service, call Lisa Hoffman at 785-452-7500 or visit morrisonhouse.srhc.com.



Annual employee campaign sets new record for support

The annual Salina Regional Health Center employee campaign to support programs and services of the Salina Regional Health Foundation raised a record \$40,459.50 this year.

Employees who chose to give had the option to support the campaign through payroll deductions or outright gifts. Every department within the organization was represented in the campaign.

The unrestricted gifts will be used to support the many programs of the Foundation, which benefit patients, families and employees themselves.

"Employees not only give of themselves through their service, but financially support the Foundation and its mission of serving the medical needs of people in our community and region," said Tom Martin, executive director of the Foundation.

Foundation extends support for medical transportation

The Salina Regional Health Foundation has continued its support of OCCK's Med-A-Van non-emergency health care transportation services by providing \$70,000 in grants this year.

The service provides a free ride to any patient within the Sunflower Health Network who has an appointment at Salina Regional Health Center or one of its affiliated facilities.

Rides to health facilities not affiliated with Salina Regional can be provided for a nominal fee. To date in 2021 Med-A-Van has been providing more than 350 rides per month for patients.



Popularity of Olivia's Playground continues to grow

On good weather days at peak times you'll commonly find Olivia's Playground at the corner of Center and Fourth streets in central Salina packed with families enjoying a little outdoor fun and recreation. And, after COVID-19 closed the park for a few months in 2020 following city guidelines for the pandemic, the comeback in activity is a sight to behold.

The multi-generational, inclusive playground was named honoring Olivia Bloomfield, the granddaughter of Sid and Susy Reitz, Salina, who sparked the idea of having a park in our community where people of all ages and abilities could play together. Olivia uses a wheelchair and enjoys playing on an inclusive playground in her hometown of Leawood, Kan.

Following a Salina Regional Health Foundation \$1.4 million capital campaign the playground was opened in 2019. Interactive games, slides, swings and play structures dominate the park along with a quarter-mile walking/running trail and exercise structures.

Parents with young kids and even entire daycares have found a lot to like about the park. Erica Arb, director for Immanuel Lutheran Church's Happy Hearts Preschool, recently brought her preschool over for a field trip after a rain.

"We love this playground and the rubberized surface that doesn't turn to mud after a rain," Arb said.



Erica Arb, director for Immanuel Lutheran Church's Happy Hearts Preschool, pushes Kaylee Schmitt on a recent excursion to Olivia's Playground. Arb occasionally brings the students over to the park, which is within easy walking distance of the preschool.

"It's a beautiful park within easy walking distance for the kids."

CHIP grant to SEF supports health needs for local students

A \$22,000 Salina Regional Health Foundation Community Health Investment Program (CHIP) grant to the Salina Education Foundation supports a number of programs impacting the health and wellbeing of Salina students at USD 305.

The grant allows teachers and staff to access funds for students experiencing hardship by providing free breakfasts, weekend meals, healthy lifestyles programming, sudden opportunity funding for early childhood health-related initiatives, nurse emergency funds and more.

"The USD 305 school nurses are very appreciative of the funds provided through CHIP," said Amy Counts, USD 305 School Nurse Coordinator. "These dollars allow us to fill in the gaps that unexpectedly arise in our students' health care needs. It allows us to assist with optometrist evaluations and glasses, dental care emergencies, respiratory care needs and a variety of urgent care needs that arise throughout the school year.

"These funds positively impact our student population and their families and help us to meet the health needs of our students," Counts said.



Jessica Owens, nurse at Coronado Elementary School, performs a vision screening on a student.

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Director's Message

Growing up, I was reminded a time or two by my parents that I was judged by the company I keep. Funny thing is, my friends' parents were probably telling their kids the same thing about me.

If you want to be 100% certain that you are keeping "good" company, join the Salina Regional Health Center Service Auxiliary. The Service Auxiliary members give of their time and themselves to make a difference at Salina Regional and in our community. Service Auxiliary members have a clear and pure motive. They just want to help. But, don't take my word for it.

On an annual basis, the Salina Regional Health Center Service Auxiliary receives the Gold Star of Excellence from Hospital Auxiliaries of Kansas.

I'm a lifetime member of the Salina Regional Health Center Service Auxiliary. I'll bet my folks thought I wasn't listening.



Tom Martin
Executive Director

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