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## Goodbye 2020, a Year in Review

by Peggy Christ, Auxiliary Board President

Let us say goodbye to 2020, the year that made normal meaningless. We all worked so hard to make life safe for ourselves and our loved ones. I will end my two years as President of the Auxiliary – two years I have enjoyed working with the hospital volunteers doing our best for Jennie.

In March the virus hit and all closed down - unfortunately. All auxiliary and volunteer activities were cancelled but not our special love for giving, the hope and charity that we know as the spirit of Jennie Edmundson. In spite of everything we carried on and made this an extraordinary year; even in the midst of a pandemic.

The Spirit of Courage was conducted in a new virtual format. The auction donations surpassed all expectations and the bidders out did themselves in their generosity making the even a success for our cancer care services.

At about this time our new Medi-Van was put in service and continues to transport patients to Jennie treatments and appointments. We all rejoiced in our new van, especially those it serves. Our splendid new Medical Office Building opened in May with a socially distanced grand-opening ceremony. Our 2020 Pink Out saw over 2100 t-shirts sold. All proceeds from the shirt sale benefit the Jennie Edmundson Breast Health Center. Thank you - proud t-shirt owners!

Our end of year Capital Campaign centers on the fifth floor remodel and opening of our Women and Newborns Center. I have a special place in my heart for this as I worked Labor and Delivery when I first started working at Jennie 40 years ago! I saw firsthand what a dedicated staff and a professional department we have and I am proud of our plans to continue to service Council Bluffs and Southwest Iowa. I'd like to call your attention to recent information - very generous donor will match all donations so it is a special time to give to this appeal!

Now we are facing the wonders of winter and the continued threat of COVID-19. We fervently pray that it will end soon and be safe to resume our usual duties and cherished activities. Your giving of yourself and your time radiates hope, peace and cheer which makes you the valued volunteers and donors that you are. Thank you for all you do for Jennie Edmundson!

God Bless!

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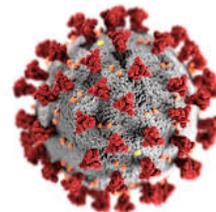


### Upcoming Events:

office will be closed on  
December 25 and January 1

January 15 - Division Heads - call in, 9AM

Call the office at 396-6040 for more information



## Thank you to our Healthcare Heroes!

Edwards Auto Group in Council Bluffs has come forward with an amazing gift to express gratitude and show support for our staff. Edwards will be providing free meals once a week to our staff – including, day, night, and weekend shifts – throughout the holiday season. Edwards has also offered a 10% discount on concierge auto services, from oil changes to repairs, for our staff.

Edwards has chosen to support both Council Bluffs hospitals because of the vital work each and every one of our staff are doing on a daily basis. Together, we have cared for so many people and saved so many lives during this pandemic, and Edwards wants to extend their thanks for continuing to give hope and healing to those who depend on us for their health.

As COVID numbers remain high in the hospital, this has been a welcome treat for our staff. We are very appreciative of Edwards Auto Group for this generous donation.



## Foundation News

by Jill Killion, Director, Foundation and Volunteer Services

We are pleased to announce that the Jennie Edmundson Foundation was instrumental in securing SWI COVID-19 Response Funds through a grant from the Southwest Iowa Foundation, Iowa West Foundation, Pottawattamie County Community Foundation, and generous Jennie Edmundson donors. These funds allowed the hospital to purchase a testing system that produces test results within an hour, drastically reducing the three- to five-day wait time for test results. Access to rapid and accurate testing helps our medical professionals quickly identify infected individuals so these patients can be isolated and receive the proper care, without further spreading the disease.

The introduction of this technology, combined with the speed of obtaining test results, is a game changer for patients and families looking to determine the level of quarantine that is needed at home or in the hospital. Imagine the amount of stress and worry it alleviates for patients and families who no longer have to go home and wait three to five days for test results. With the new system, results are available within 45 minutes, before patients are released. The increased speed of obtaining test results has also improved our efficiency in transmitting data to public health officials who are tracking the spread of the virus. Thank you to our generous donors!

## TIME OUT For Staff

by Jill Killion, Director, Foundation and Volunteer Services

It's no secret that with the onset of COVID, stress levels among healthcare workers and those working the front lines have certainly been elevated. The Foundation has been working hard to help ease the stress of our co-workers. In addition to providing snacks periodically to all areas of the hospital, we recently introduced TIME OUT to all Jennie staff. Since no visitors under the age of 18 are allowed in the hospital that means our Teen Volunteer program has been put on hold. As a result we converted the Teen Lounge into a TIME OUT room. This new self-care room is designed to provide hospital employees the time and space needed after a difficult case or stressful situation. The room has two massage chairs, lounge chairs, relaxing music provided by ALEXA and wonderful scenic photos of Lake Manawa adorning the walls, compliments of Joanie Tekippe's photographic lens. The room has only been open a week, but it has been a big hit!



## Women and Newborns Update

Mother's in Council Bluffs and Western Iowa deserve exceptional healthcare. In the past several years, there has been an increase in maternal health challenges in Iowa, which include many rural labor and delivery units closing, leaving women with limited options in rural areas for care. Council Bluffs and our surrounding area also have unique challenges that accompany the closing of OB-GYN units. Our communities are diverse, close knit and representative of many distinct social and economic groups. As healthcare providers, we must stand ready to serve across the spectrum of diversity that is our communities.

Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital hears this need – and we are responding. We believe that Western Iowa deserves first rate medical care in Council Bluffs. Through our partnership with Methodist Women's Hospital, we are excited to have expanded the scope of women's services to Council Bluffs and Western Iowa. No longer will families need to travel to Omaha to receive premier care – mothers will be served with skill and pride in the comfort of their hometown.

We are expanding and renovating the 5th Floor of Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital to create a state-of-the-art women's services center of excellence that will include:

Six private rooms where mothers can labor in a comfortable and soothing, "feel at home" environment.

- C-Section suite with the ability to do skin to skin in the surgical space.
- A larger and more accommodating waiting area for family and friends.
- Twelve post-partum rooms for bonding with new baby.
- An infant security system that ensures the safety of our patients.
- Three Jacuzzi tubs available for pain control.
- Four spacious Level II NICU bays with a dedicated space for more private, complex care consultations.
- Expanded space for childbirth education, prenatal breastfeeding education and post-partum breastfeeding support.

We have also staffed our Women's Services Center with the highest skilled and very best Clinicians to give our mothers and new babies the most compassionate, current, and extraordinary care in this amazing new center, which will be opening in late 2020.

**YOU can make a difference with a pledge to this campaign.** Pledges can be paid over time and every gift makes an impact! Your donation can also go further and have more of an impact - if you donate TODAY! A generous donor has challenged us to raise \$325,000 - once we have raised that, they will match it! Help us reach this goal and pledge today! Call (712) 396-6040 or visit our online donation page today and make your pledge today.

## Have you heard the News?

by Jill Killion, Director, Foundation & Volunteer Services

I'm retiring at the end of the year...I know...crazy isn't it! I told Tara my plans about a year ago, but I think she's been in denial all this time. Now that it's just weeks away, it's becoming more real. It seems like yesterday that I joined the staff at Jennie Edmundson. First as Volunteer Coordinator and then as Director of Foundation and Volunteer Services. Apparently "yesterday" was actually 2014. As they say "Time flies, when you're having fun" ...and I really have had a lot of fun here! I absolutely loved getting to know all of the volunteers (active, retired, special events, etc.). It has really been great fun! I had the opportunity to interact with "my" volunteers as well as community members both in the hospital and at the various functions sponsored by the Foundation. Events like the Bald and the Brave, Dance to the Beat, Wheels of Courage, Spirit of Courage and Pink Out have all been such successful events that I'm so proud to have been a part of.



When people hear I'm retiring, they always ask "What will you do to keep busy?" Before COVID interrupted our lives I had grand plans of doing more traveling. Those plans have been scaled back, but I do hope to still get in some trips. My husband, Rick, has no plans of retiring anytime soon, but he does have flexibility when it comes to taking time off, so that should work well with my schedule. I've got plenty of projects to work on around the house, and I do want to do more golfing when the warm weather returns. I'm pretty sure I'll be able to fill my days. Who knows, you might even see me around the hospital from time to time. The current Volunteer Coordinator knows where I live!

Thanks for the wonderful experience!

## Yearend Note from Tara

by Tara Slevin, Vice President and Chief Philanthropy Officer

Without a doubt, 2020 has brought both unprecedented challenges and unexpected blessings to each of us. More than 30 years after joining the Jennie family, I continue to feel privileged to work in a health care organization where extraordinary acts of kindness and generosity happen all the time.

Our Jennie family has felt the love of our community this year as well, as donations of masks, hot meals, snacks, social media blasts, and sidewalk thank-you messages continue to pour in. We are grateful for the numerous individuals who continue to support our COVID-19 Crisis Response Fund, which has provided comfort and support as we navigated the unknowns of the pandemic over the past ten months.

**We are grateful for the ongoing support provided by each of our dedicated volunteers!** We know that the months ahead will bring ongoing challenges, but we are encouraged to glimpse rays of light at the end of the tunnel. We look forward to working alongside everyone to rebuild our volunteer program and make it stronger than ever. We are so thankful to those who have felt safe to return, and we have greatly missed those who could not come back during the pandemic.

As 2020 comes to a close, we want to share a Jennie THANK YOU and virtual hugs with two wonderful leaders, Jill Killion and Peg Christ.

Peg's leadership, guidance, and understanding of the need to pivot and even suspend our volunteer program for a short time have been deeply appreciated. We have enjoyed working alongside Peg while she served as a Division Head for 7 years and then as President for the past two years. Her ongoing dedication, enthusiasm, grit, and love for Jennie will be important as we look for leaders throughout the organization to help us reinvigorate our volunteer program and find ways to continue providing support to our hospital staff and community. Peg has been an important part of the Jennie family for decades, and we are excited to see what her future role will entail.

Jill's leadership, can-do attitude, and willingness to pitch in and help wherever needed have been a blessing to our Volunteer and Foundation departments as well as just about every department throughout the hospital. Whenever Jill walks throughout the facility, she is always on the lookout for ways to improve the look, feel, and services provided. Jill is always the first to offer help, often trailblazing a path toward success. Her daily presence will be greatly missed, but we have no intention of letting her get too far away from the Jennie Family that she has come to know and love.

What a year this has been! Although I'm eager to move forward, I am also grateful for the blessings we have received! I am proud of the work we have done to protect our patients, frontline employees, and volunteers, as well as the measures we've taken to support and protect our community. I am deeply grateful for our Volunteer and Foundation staff who have continued to step forward and look for solutions to each new challenge. Despite the uncertainty surrounding the virus over the past ten months, our incredible volunteers have continued to help in every way possible. Some of you returned in June, while others provided ongoing support through phone calls, sewing, prayers, encouragement, and praise. Your willingness to help is yet another reminder that we are fortunate to have such an incredible group of men and women sharing their time and talents with us!

We feel blessed to walk alongside you as we face a future filled with important work to be done. On behalf of all of Jennie's staff, I would like to wish you a safe, healthy, and Merry Christmas!

Tara



The holidays bring opportunities to celebrate special traditions and meaningful moments with the people in our lives. As you prepare for November and December holidays, including but not limited to: Diwali; Kwanzaa; Thanksgiving; Hanukkah; Christmas Eve/Christmas; and New Year's Eve, these holiday planning safety tips can help protect you, your family, friends, and community from COVID-19.

## Travel Considerations

If traveling this holiday season, consider the mode of transportation (plane, car, bus, train), the dates you will be traveling, and your risk to COVID-19 exposure while traveling. Carry a small personal sanitizing kit that contains hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, and extra masks.

Driving your own vehicle will reduce your exposure to COVID-19. If you need to use commercial or public transportation, be aware of and try to avoid the busiest travel times. Also, reconsider travel during the holiday season and consider holding special remote gatherings or small gatherings at home.



## Overnight Guests

If you plan to have or be an overnight guest, the host and guests should communicate about what is expected ahead of time.

Identify a room where an individual can isolate should they develop symptoms or test positive while visiting. Make sure everyone understands the importance of wearing a mask and social distancing. Ensure that soap and sanitizer are available, and clean frequently touched surfaces.



## Holiday Meals

- Consider limiting your in-person gatherings to those within your household.
- Limit the number of people for which social distancing is possible before, during, and after the meal.
- Consider single-use disposable utensils and dishware for serving and eating meals.
- Wash and disinfect guest areas before and after holiday gatherings.



## Additional Considerations

- Avoid crowds of people shopping for holiday meals by purchasing groceries online.
- Delivering holiday foods, dessert, or décor at the door of extended family, elders, friends, or neighbors is another warm and safer way to celebrate a season of giving.
- Consider virtual caroling or reciting as an option.

## Holiday Shopping

Consider alternative ways to purchase gifts other than visiting stores in-person, where possible.

Stay home if you have tested positive or have symptoms of COVID-19, which can include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms.

- **Lower Risk:** Consider shopping online.
- **Medium Risk:** If you choose to shop in-person, wear your mask and maintain six feet of distance between you and others. Try to shop at off-peak times when there are fewer shoppers.
- **Higher Risk:** High-risk activities include in-person sale promotions or holiday activities that encourage large crowds and lining up for limited supply deals, which make social distancing a challenge.





933 East Pierce Street, Box 2C  
Council Bluffs, IA 51502

Change Services Requested

## Thank you Volunteers!

**This Thanksgiving the Volunteer Services department made a special video for our volunteers. Check out the video on our website:**

**[www.jehfoundation.org/about/volunteers](http://www.jehfoundation.org/about/volunteers)**



## Volunteer Opportunities:

At this time we have about 35 volunteers who have returned to various service areas in the hospital. We have taken precautions to ensure their safety while working in the hospital. If you are growing tired of being at home and are interested in returning to volunteer, please contact Courtney at 396-6040 to discuss openings.

