

Unfold!

1967

Example of FEATURE article on Auxiliary
(Could be tied-in with Benefit Publicity, also.)



Mrs. Allan G. Gruchy selects books and magazines for her book cart. She is a volunteer at University Hospital.

University of Maryland Hospital

Miles Mount Up A

AS Mrs. Allan G. Gruchy, wife of an economics professor at the University of Maryland, makes her book cart rounds at University Hospital each Tuesday, few patients realize that she makes a 65-mile round trip weekly for her day of work as a volunteer.

She is one of four College Park faculty wives who piled up 2,112 hours of volunteer work at the hospital last year, reports Mrs. Jane Strawinski, director of volunteers. The others are the wives of Dr. Henry A. Walker, assistant dean of University College; Dr. Carl Bode, professor of English, and Dr. Joseph F. Luetkemeyer, associate professor of industrial education.

Mrs. Albin O. Kuhn, whose husband is vice president for the Baltimore campuses, had been making the trip from College Park for about two years before she moved to Catonsville, and continues to come from there for her volunteer work.

Respite From Routine

All the women look forward to the weekly respite from home routines, and refuse to make any date that might interfere with their hospital work. Mrs. Strawinski counts them among her most faithful workers.

"I expect a few 'sick calls' at

the last minute even from nearby volunteers," she says, "but nothing seems to stop these women. I can think of only one day when an unexpected blizzard blocked all transportation for them—even the bus had stopped running. And they came in the following Friday to make up the time! On more than one occasion, Mrs. Walker has made two trips in one day, to collect and deliver work done by other faculty wives in College Park."

Work Melts Away

It was Mrs. Walker, as chairman of social services for the University of Maryland Campus Club, a group of faculty wives, who organized the hospital volunteers within the club and who now coordinates their activities.

She has a list of 30 members willing to work in the hospital, but only 4 have schedules that allow them to make the regular Tuesday trip. Since it doesn't seem practical for anyone to come alone, or for a group to come for less than six hours' work, Mrs. Walker has made arrangements to take work from the hospital down to College Park for some of the women to do there.

All sorts of piled-up work melts away under the energies of these women, who meet frequently at Mrs. Walker's home to assemble hospital charts, put

Mrs. Marjorie Feiland, I believe, Assistant Public Relations, University of Maryland Hospital got this write-up.

s Volunteers Work

together kits for Central Supplies, address and stuff envelopes, or alphabetize cards—in other words, anything at all that can be done away from the hospital.

Mrs. Walker, a dynamo of energy herself, inspires the same spirit in others. "If only people know what a lift we get from coming over here," she says, "University Hospital would have more volunteers than it could possibly use. People say to me, 'Why do you go way over to Baltimore when there are hospitals much nearer home?' But University loyalty is part of our reason for coming. We feel that we are contributing something, and everyone at the hospital has made us feel that we are wanted and necessary."

In-Service Training

One of the nursing supervisors in the hospital confirms the fact that the volunteers are indeed wanted and necessary. The shortage of hospital workers being what it is, she lists some of the "million and one things" that she counts on a volunteer to do—"make beds, run errands, give out trays, pass out mail, arrange flowers, help to admit and discharge patients. . . ." The list goes on and on.

Several of the women have had some sort of preparatory

experience for the work. Beyond the in-service training that the hospital conducts. Mrs. Walker, for example, had worked as a Gray Lady in a hospital run by the Army at Fort Richardson, in Anchorage, Alaska.

Mrs. Kuhn took a Red Cross course and a first-aid course as preparation. She loves the work because she enjoys being with patients, and has had many different assignments—on the reception desk in radiation therapy, in the outpatient canteen, on the third floor with ward patients, and on the eleventh floor with private patients.

Mrs. Gruchy, a former teacher, keeps track of individual preferences as patients make selections from her book cart. She remembers which third-floor patient it is who likes detective stories, and who is waiting for a certain paperback. She also collects magazines and playing cards for patients' use. She feels that it is important for volunteers to know what to do in an emergency—for example, how to help evacuate a floor if it should ever be necessary. She is proud to remember that as a 13-year-old girl she didn't panic when her mother became suddenly ill, but was able to get help that saved her life.

Gift Shop Service

Mrs. Bode, on the other hand, is one who frankly admits that, much as she enjoys the hospital atmosphere, her preference is not an assignment on the patient floors.

"I'm afraid I would feel like taking to bed myself if I had to work too closely with sick people," she says. "But I do like to work in the gift shop, and I get to know almost everyone around the hospital, even visitors who come here often."

A past president of the Campus Club, Mrs. Bode helped originate the club's volunteer activities and has boundless enthusiasm for the work. Now in Europe for a few months with her husband, who is on a sabbatical, she plans to resume her volunteer work as soon as she returns.

Dr. Bode, who frequently drives to Baltimore for research in the Enoch Pratt Free Library, sometimes chauffeurs the women on their Tuesday trip.

A Special Sympathy

Mrs. Luetkemeyer, like Mrs. Gruchy a former teacher, believes that an important part of her job is establishing rapport with patients. Assigned to the tenth floor, she "does a little bit of everything," she says. Besides such services as helping to check in patients and feeding them, she makes it a point to talk to anyone who seems to need to tell someone about his problems. Having been a companion to an older woman during one of her college years, she has a special sympathy with older people.

The thousands of dollars in savings to the hospital that the College Park volunteers' contribution represents is considerable in itself. But far more valuable, Mrs. Strawinski says, is the good spirit that they impart to everyone they see. "I am sure," she says, "that it plays an important part in many patients' recovery."



Mrs. Albin O. Kuhn makes beds at the hospital. This is part of the volunteer service she gives to aid others.



Mrs. Henry A. Walker, another volunteer worker, helps discharge patients at University Hospital in Baltimore.

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