



**Alabama Council of Hospital Auxiliaries**

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**An Affiliate of Alabama Hospital Association.**



**ACHA**

**Statewide organization designed to support volunteers at hospitals, nursing homes, and other health organizations.**

**Fall Conference**

**October 13—15, 2024**

The ACHA

# Communicator

**Volume 36 Issue 2**

**April 2024**

***Message from the Chair***

Understanding—When I need to express myself, it’s important to me to feel understood. This awareness reminds me to be empathetic toward others who wish to share their views with me. I listen with an open mind and soft heart, seeking to understand. Several weeks ago, a letter was sent recommending we dissolve the formal structure of the Alabama Council of Hospital Auxiliaries, not the local auxiliaries. Since we didn't receive much feedback, I'm trusting everyone understands this decision. There will be a formal vote taken at the conference in Oct. to confirm the board's decision.



A feeling of great enthusiasm describes my feelings, as we prepare for the “Grand Celebration” during the ACHA 2024 “Final” Fall Conference, October 13-15, Eufaula State Park. I encourage everybody to make plans NOW (Block out those days) to come to Eufaula!!! The committee is hard at work to ensure an enjoyable session. I am very appreciative to those around me, who are using their unique ability in bringing this finale into fruition. I am grateful to have so much to appreciate. A TEAM Spirit! A TEAM can accomplish so much more than individuals! - Johnnie Knott

***Message from Chair Elect:***

This message is coming to you from my heart. I have served the on the ACHA board for many years beginning with your Project Chair, Vice Chair of District III, District III Chair and now Chair Elect. I have enjoyed being able to meet so many of you over the years at District meetings and Fall Conferences. Each of you have become my special friends.



Our board is in the process of planning the most wonderful final Fall Conference and we are really excited to have each auxiliary help celebrate with us. Since this will be the final conference at this time we really want it to be so exciting and memorable for each of us. It is our hope and prayer that the Alabama Auxiliaries will be excited to write a new chapter for the future. Each auxiliary will be receiving information on ways that each of you can help.

I am excited about the future and know you are also. As volunteers, we make a difference in our communities and are appreciated by so many.

- Fay Burns

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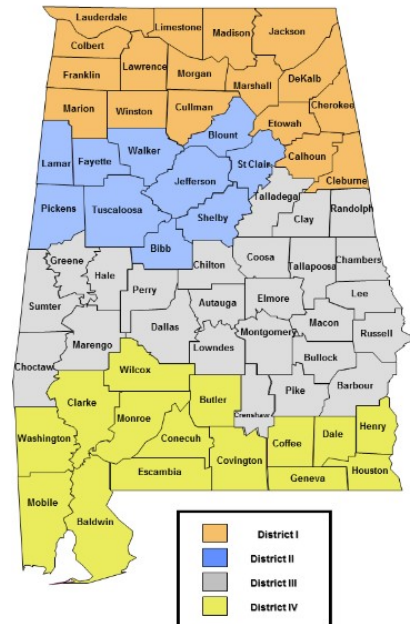
# ACHA Board

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## **2023—2024 ACHA Board Members**

- \* Johnnie Knott - Chair
- \* Fay Burns - Chair Elect
- \* Bonnie Mollett - Past Chair
- \* TBD - At large Member Representing District 1
- \* Karen Roberts - At large Member Representing District 2
- \* Sandra Boone - At large Member Representing District 3
- \* Tammy Lee - At large Member Representing District 4
- \* Cheryl Till - Project Chairman
- \* Tanny McMillian - Newsletter Chair
- \* Glen Ireland - DVS Liaison

### ACHA DISTRICT MAP



## **Message from the Past Chair**

Spring—Flowers blooming, cooler weather, trees budding. It really brings exciting times watching all the beautiful colors of nature. I ran across this article of ‘Benefits of Volunteering’ and I wanted to share this list with you.

1. Provides you a sense of purpose
2. Provides you with a sense of community
3. Helps you meet new friends
4. Increases your social skills
5. Improve self-esteem
6. Teaches you valuable skills
7. Brings fun into your life
8. Can help you be happier
9. Gets you out of comfort zone



Have a happy Spring. Remember to start preparing for the Fall conference in October! You know I love seeing your sweet smiling faces.

- Bonnie Molett

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# Message from the Board

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## ***Message from Project Chair***

Each year the ACHA wants to select a service project on which to focus, and this year the choice was to use the volunteers! They could share with their special loved ones their collective voices to encourage friends, family and fellow volunteers their wishes for care through the end of the life so those wishes can be understood. There is a wonderful starter guide “Your Conversation Starter Guide” from [www.theconversationproject.org](http://www.theconversationproject.org), which provides ideas to help share your wishes with loved ones. A great way to share this guide includes starting a discussion, distributing it at one of your auxiliary meetings and asking a passionate person to speak at your next meeting.



Looking forward to our next board meeting in planning our October 13-15th Final Conference. It will really be special, and I hope we will have a large attendance!! Hope everyone had a Happy Easter!

- Cheryl Till



## ***Message from ACHA Board Member: Newsletter Chair***

Communicator—The Newsletter is published quarterly: **January, April, July, and October**. Submit your articles and include district number, auxiliary name, and the auxiliary president’s name. If pictures are included—provide the caption detail for the picture. We would love to hear about what’s going on at your auxiliary. Send in articles and pictures every quarter!

It is my pleasure to compile the Communicator Newsletter for ACHA and I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Conference!

Next Deadline to submit is **June 8th, 2014** for the July Publication.

Please submit all Articles to **TannyMcMillian@gmail.com**.

Happy Reading!



- Tanny McMillian



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# District II

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## ***Message from District II Member At Large***

We are all deeply saddened by the dissolution of the ACHA. However, the good news is that the Communicator Newsletter will still be published. It now becomes even more important to stay in touch with each other through the Communicator. So going forward, send in a few sentences or a short summary to let us know what is going on within your Auxiliary.



- Karen Roberts

## ***Brookwood Medical Auxiliary***

The year 2024 has a new name for Brookwood volunteers: The Year of Recruiting. The pandemic depleted our supply of volunteers, as it did everywhere, but those who stayed have kept the foundational elements of our program strong.

With the pandemic in the rear view mirror, we have firmly turned our sights on building the program again. Shelby Jacobs, Volunteer Coordinator, has brainstormed with volunteers to generate ideas to bring in new faces. In March we hosted a Volunteer Recruitment Brunch. We limited the focus to those we could directly invite to attend, as this was a trial run to see how we will host these for larger groups. The trial was a success, and we look forward to scheduling another of these events soon, this one open to a wider audience. Shelby worked with the hospital cafeteria to provide delicious treats. She decorated with flowers and colors that proclaimed Spring and New Beginnings. The atmosphere was upbeat with music, and Shelby provided gifts and information for the visitors to take home with them. We decided that the best way to share our program with guests was by mingling with them as they arrived, engaging in conversation so that we could learn more about them, and so that they could learn more about us and our program. New friendships were begun that day, and it reminded us, once again, of one of the chief reasons we volunteer – the people: staff, patients, visitors, and our fellow volunteers.

We look forward to continued recruitment and meeting more new faces in the future. The attached picture shows several of the people at the event – Shelby Jacobs, at left, is joined by some of her volunteers and visitors.

- Janis Cole, President



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# District II

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## ***Grandview Medical Center Auxiliary***

February 14th, the Grandview Auxiliary hosted the annual “VOLUNTEERS LOVE GRANDVIEW EMPLOYEES DAY”. Over 700 delicious heart shaped cookies were given to the employees. When you volunteer you think about how good it makes you feel, until you witness how a small gesture like the cookie brought the biggest smiles to the employees. Of course, this would not be possible without the dedicated volunteers who put so much effort into our very successful January Uniform2U sale. The sale days are long, but the time and effort given allows us, the volunteers, to make an impact. We had two successful fundraisers, thanks to volunteers helping and employees eager to purchase items. As a result, our volunteer numbers are growing along with the exciting expansion projects Grandview Medical Center will be undertaking. We are looking forward to the planned sales so we may continue to support our future endeavors.



- Karen Roberts, President

## ***Princeton Baptist Medical Center Auxiliary***

Hello to all, it's beginning to look a lot like Spring! Our Auxiliary participated in our 6th annual Project Christmas Morning. The staff purchased gifts for our own employee's children for Christmas. We had 22 children adopted. Also, in January we purchased coloring books and crayons for our children visitors and Emergency Room children patients.

On Valentine's Day the volunteers handed out cookies to staff and physicians. Everyone enjoyed the sweet treats! The Auxiliary held its first Uniforms 2U Sale on January 24 and 25. Our employees always enjoy this sale and sporting new uniforms.

- Linda Gray, President



*Project—Christmas Morning Gifts: Bettie and Beth*

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# District II

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## ***Shelby Baptist Medical Center Auxiliary***

Shelby Baptist Medical Center is in “Full Swing for Spring”. In February, new officers were elected and the proposed budget was approved. Our vice-president asked for permission to prepare and distribute an electronic newsletter which will include volunteer’s story. The newsletter’s purpose is to highlight volunteers in effort to get to know all the volunteers.

Our “Ways and Means” have included Shoe Sale, Uniform Sale, \$5 Jewelry Sale, Sweet Vendors and Food trucks. These have been profitable however, we are continuously in search for other fundraising activities. Patients continue to appreciate our Heart Pillows, Tray Favors and visits from our Patient Advocacy volunteers. Family members of the patients also appreciate our volunteers in the Cath Lab, Surgery Waiting and other services throughout the hospital. We also have great volunteers that serve ‘behind the scenes’ such as assembling binders or other hands-on tasks.

We continue to honor our Life Time members who have served as volunteers for at least 10 years. Hours spent volunteering is now calculated by computer, thanks to modern technology. This is especially helpful in presenting pins and patches. Our Christmas decorations were absolutely beautiful. We have a hospital employee who plays Santa Clause (who looks exactly like Santa himself). Children young and old come to Santa and gather by the tree, while Christmas music, cookies and punch add to the joy of the season.

Fall is such a beautiful time of the year. We greet autumn with a Chili Cook-off and recognize our favorite football team with decorations. Amazing art sculpture of carved pumpkins are on display from the different departments, showcasing the talents of our employees. Our volunteers supply music and prizes for the Cake Walk. Shelby Baptist Medical Center in Alabaster is extremely crucial in serving the health needs of those in the surrounding area, as well as local. The staff, nurses, and doctors are highly proficient in their field and are committed in serving the best for the patient.

Loretta Barber, President



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# District II

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## ***Walker Baptist Auxiliary***

Starting 2024, three new volunteers received awards. We are so very proud of our volunteers and are happy to welcome new members to our team. Judy Herron, Ester Duncan, and Melodie Green received the 50 hours pin.

The WBMC Volunteer Auxiliary Annual Meeting was held February 16, 2024, at 9:30 A.M. in the Education Center. This meeting was well attended by currently active, new volunteers, and some volunteers who will be returning this year. Hopefully, the Surgery Waiting Station will open, and we will see volunteers return to active service there. We are so happy to welcome everyone back.

Mr. Sean Johnson, the CEO of WBMC, attended and related some career highlights and hospital statistics. Rev. David Johnson led us in the Auxiliary Prayer, blessed our meal, and helped with the installation of our 2024 slate of Officers. Rev. Charles Kidd, volunteer Chaplain, also attended the meeting. Committee reports were given, and Melissa Taylor listed Volunteer Auxiliary activities for 2023. One of the last 2023 programs in which we participated was helping with Christmas gifts for some WBMC Employees' children. She presented a check to the Auxiliary from the Gift Shop. The auxiliary voted on one By-laws amendment. The meeting was adjourned.

- Nan Bishop, President



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# District III

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## ***Vaughan Regional Medical Center Auxiliary***

2024 started on a sad note for the Vaughan Regional Medical Center Auxiliary. Our long-time member and vice-president, Jannie Venter passed away on January 4, 2024 after a courageous battle against cancer. Jannie joined the Auxiliary on May 1, 2012 and quickly became an integral part of our team. She was named Volunteer of the Year, after her first year, which made her so proud. She was also an important part of the Selma community. She was a member of many organizations. Last year she celebrated her 50th year of hosting a Gospel Radio Show on WHBB, a local radio station. Jannie also served as a Selma City Councilwoman from 2004 – 2008. The ACHA might remember her best for running the bingo games at many conferences. Rest in Peace Jannie! We miss you!



*Jannie Venter (1941—1924)*

Our annual Orientation meeting was held on January 30th . Our officers for the next two years are: Debby Travis, President; Betty Friday, Vice President; Deborah Spicer, Secretary; Bonnie Molett, Treasurer; Wilma Thomas, Recording Secretary; and Betty Friday, Gift Shop Manager. We have a busy spring coming up including our Uniform Sale in March, the \$5.00 Sale in April, and our Clothing Sale in May. We are also proud to announce we are awarding 3 scholarships this year and are in the process of planning for this. More information and pictures to come!

The VRMC Auxiliary hopes you have a wonderful and healthy spring!

- Debby Travis , President





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# District III

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## ***East Alabama Health Auxiliary***

The East Alabama Health Auxiliary have a busy spring ahead. We began the 2024 year by hosting a Bingo Fellowship for all of our volunteers in February. We came together for hot chocolate and snacks and spent the afternoon playing bingo. We celebrated our wins with fun prizes. This is the first social gathering besides our spring luncheon that we have been able to host since COVID.

Our Auxiliary looks forward to coordinating our \$5 Jewelry Sale on April 21st, 22nd, and 23rd for our employees and the local community. The money raised during our fundraiser will help fund our three scholarships that we will be giving to local high school students this Spring.



## ***Greene County Health System Auxiliary***

We all have this limited time on earth. How can we help others? This is the question that is asked by this auxiliary. The answer is, "Have we made the difference we set out to make?" Grammatically incorrect! You cannot answer a question with a question. However, each auxiliary member is ready to return to give of their time and energy to the hospital, Physician Clinic and Nursing Home.

- Geraldine Walton, President



*As we celebrate Women's Day — We Celebrate.  
Pictured: Geraldine Walton and Bobby Carpenter*

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# District III

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## ***Russell Medical Auxiliary***

Hello everyone, here we are again springing forward with our clocks and extending our days of sunlight. The flowers are getting ready to pop out in full bloom. It's such a beautiful time of year!

We had a very busy November thru February. November /December started out with our "Holiday Tree of Lights". This is a fundraiser we do with our community every year with 100% of the profits going to our scholarship program. We sell cards to place on the tree in honor or in memory of friends or family members. In December, we also helped with "DECK THE HALLS" which is the Christmas event held by Russell Medical for its employees and their families. We had a great time getting our pictures made with Santa and Mrs. Claus, enjoying cookies and hot chocolate as well as many more holiday related activities. We are now preparing for our Appreciation Luncheon and \$5 Show. Both of these are held in April. We also have made several appearances on our local



TV show "THE FRONT PORCH". We use this opportunity as a platform to recruit new members. Our volunteers contribute so much to our daily operations here at Russell Medical. We could not be who we are without them.



"Volunteering is at the very core of being a human. No one has made it through life without someone else's HELP" (Heather French Henry) "ALWAYS TURN A NEGATIVE INTO A POSTIVE"

- Melissa Edwards, Coordinator

## ***Whitfield Regional Hospital Auxiliary***

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas with good food, family, and friends, and that you missed the Flu Grinch during the holidays. Thanks to all the hard work of WRH Auxiliary members, our fall fund-raisers added about \$12,000 to our treasury.

We rejoice in the fact that we have two new members, neither of whom has white hair nor walks with a cane. Hallelujah! We also presented certificates to three members whose dedicated service combined to total 53 years. WRH Auxiliary recently cashed in a CD for \$25,000 dollars, half of the funds which will be donated to the recently reactivated Hospital Foundation and the other half will be used to award scholarships to high school seniors who plan to study in the medical field. These scholarships will be awarded on honors day at the participating schools. Several fund-raisers are being planned for the Spring. Our very popular \$5.00 jewelry sale is now in progress, and the equally popular 'Britches and Bows' sale will follow soon after.

We wish all our fellow auxiliary groups a blessed Easter.

Kathy Patterson, President

# State Project



ACHA 2023-2024 State Project

## Crucial Conversations

Each year the Alabama Council of Hospital Auxiliaries selects a service project on which to focus. This year, we want to use our collective volunteer voices to encourage our friends, family and fellow volunteers to share with their loved ones their wishes for care through the end of life, so those wishes can be understood and respected.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

Download “Your Conversation Starter Guide” from [www.theconversationproject.org](http://www.theconversationproject.org). Review this booklet, fill it out as fully as possible and then:

- Share it (your wishes) with your loved ones. It won't do any good to try and promote these conversations unless you have personal experience in having them. If it's important for others, it's important for you.
- Share the guide with your friends and encourage them to have similar discussions.
- Copy it and distribute it at one of your auxiliary meetings. Find someone in your hospital who is passionate about the subject and ask them to come and speak and answer questions (e.g., physician, chaplain).
- Ask that passionate person to speak at your next women's circle, garden club, Rotary meeting.

### IMPORTANT TIPS

- You may want more information before answering some of the questions, particularly for medical questions. So, check with your doctor first before completing the booklet.
- Don't feel like you have to make all of the decisions right away, but don't put it off too long either. These discussions need to start happening while we are young. We can always change our minds as we get older and go back and edit our wishes.
- Once you know what you want, it's a good idea to write it down in a document called an advanced directive. This can be used to tell your family, physician, nurse or other members of your healthcare team what kind of medical care you want if you are too sick or hurt to talk or make decisions. Make sure you give a copy of your directive to your physicians and family members and that you take it with you if you have to go into the hospital.
- When you talk with others, have copies of both the Conversation Guide and Alabama's Advanced Directive. You can find more information on that at [www.alaha.org/advanced-directives](http://www.alaha.org/advanced-directives).
- Sometimes people may not be ready to have these conversations. If that's the case, you might simply leave the information with them and suggest they contact you if they would like to talk at a later date.



### MORE RESOURCES

Visit [www.theconversationproject.org](http://www.theconversationproject.org) where you will find not only the guide mentioned, but also a guide for those with serious illness, a guide for caregivers of children with serious illness, a guide for choosing a healthcare proxy (someone to speak for you if you are too sick or hurt to speak for yourself).