



soraya's corner

By Soraya Skinner

St. John's Pleasant Valley Emergency Room Ambassadors Program

Where we are located is a highly desirable place to live and work. We have a strong economic base that includes major industries such as agriculture, advanced technology, oil production, tourism, still growing and advancing in many different ways. We are also lucky to have a great place to go when we need to take care of our health, like St. John Pleasant Valley Hospital.

If you haven't been by the Emergency Department - hopefully, you never have to - I would recommend while you are there to go check it out and you will notice a few changes. The ED currently has 14 beds and the department sees an average of 24,000 cases a year. With the addition of rapid care rooms, visiting ED patients with less severe emergencies will now receive direct access to prompt care in a relaxed and healing space, further reducing wait times and increasing efficiency. This is another step in our overall effort to deliver the best care to the residents in Camarillo.

Second, I would like to tell you about their Emergency Department Ambassadors program that was introduced in 2016. This program, fondly known as EDA, began with one volunteer, Joe Muklevicz, and within a couple of months, expanded to five volunteers. Today there are 18 volunteers eager to help patients in the emergency room. You know how we get so stressed when we go to an emergency room being sick and having to wait for a long time? Well, this is where these volunteers come to rescue. Ambassadors provide an important human touch in an environment that is fast paced and often stressful for patients. These loyal volunteers come from varied walks of life: a sea captain, banker, waitress, and doctor's assistant. What connects them is a passion to put their caring personalities to work. In addition to having a deep compassion for others, Ambassadors must be willing to work as a team, have a talent for communicating with many levels of people (patients, other volunteers, and medical

staff), and be skilled at judging an environment to determine when to engage and when to refrain from engagement. Ambassadors are comfortable in the emergency room and have a gift for calming people who are anxious and fearful.

"Since the environment we are in can be intense, we allow flexibility in scheduling dates and times for volunteers. We coordinate our schedules during our monthly meeting and use that time to debrief and discuss how we can make the program better. We typically have the Director of Nursing, as well as Dr. Jeff, E D Director, in attendance" says Joe Muklevicz, founding Ambassador. Joe heads up a special task force and volunteer program. The Emergency Department Volunteers have been most effective with patient and family support in the hospital's emergency room.

"We see that the overall satisfaction rates in the ED have improved in the last year, and we believe we have contributed to that. But best reward is the thanks we get from staff and patients." Joe says. "When people ask me why I do this, I tell them 'you can call it Dignity, St John's or Pleasant Valley, but the bottom line is this is my hospital. My family and friends come here and anything I can do towards continuing improvement makes sense to me.'"

Needless to say, they are very excited about this program as well as the new \$80 Million addition that will open soon at Pleasant Valley. Joe would be very pleased to explain this program in detail to anyone interested. He can be contacted at jamaviation@gmail.com or on his cell at (818) 914-1452.

Until next time, remember, "Perhaps you will forget tomorrow the kind words you say today, but the recipient may cherish them over a life time." Dale Carnegie

Truly Yours,
Soraya



Dr. Jeff Davies, Director St. John's Emergency Department, Joe Muklevicz