TRUE BLUE NEWS
A Publication of the NCH Healthcare System Auxiliaries

Inside the NCH White Elephant ...

If you are like most NCH Volunteers, you may have heard of the NCH White Elephant Thrift Store, but you probably haven’t given much thought about what goes on behind those big glass doors at 2157 Pine Ridge Road. So, this month, we will be taking you on a behind the scenes adventure at NCH’s White Elephant. First, a few facts –

- This year, proceeds from the White Elephant and the two Gifts Shops located at the hospitals funded almost $60,000 of equipment and supplies focusing on enhancing patient care services provided by the NCH Healthcare System.

- The White Elephant accepts donations 5 days/week (Tuesday – Friday 8 am – 4 pm; Saturday 8am – 2pm) and is open for retail sales 4 days/week (Tuesday – Thursday and Saturday, 8:30 am – 4 pm).

- In season, approximately 30 volunteers assist at the White Elephant, dropping to about 15 over the summer months.

- You can donate AND purchase used automobiles at the White Elephant periodically. Call Maria Racine at (239) 624-6690 for more details on this exciting program.

- The term “White Elephant” originated from Southeast Asian cultures that believed albino elephants were sacred and therefore protected from labor, so owning a white elephant was both a blessing and a curse, since it was considered an honor to own, but the owner was obligated to provide expensive care for the animal while not getting much practical use from it.

Now, onto our adventure. Through the doors of the donation center, enter many a treasure and, well, a few “white elephants.” Some of the more “unusual” donations have included stuffed animals (we’re talking about giant taxidermy bears and fishes, not the fluffy Build-a-Bear variety...), an entire outdoor kitchen setup, complete with gas grill and refrigerator and a few “mystery items” that our always curious volunteers have had to actually ask the donors what they were! And then there are the “diamonds in the rough” which are items sought out by savvy shoppers or resellers. Recent “diamonds” have included expensive china and silver items as well as an ornate Victorian-era chandelier.

After items are received by the White Elephant’s Donation Center, volunteers inspect the items to make sure that the item is in working condition, are not on a recall list. Items that pass this quality control check are priced and readied for display on the sales floor. Items that do not meet the White Elephant’s quality standards are held for pick up by a recycling firm.

Volunteers at the White Elephant are assigned to specific departments, such as Kitchen & Dining, Books & Electronics, Clothing, Furniture, Appliances, Linens and Toys & Sporting Goods and Boutique. They work to display merchandise creatively and assist shoppers as they are making purchase decisions.

So how can you help? So glad you asked! There are many ways you can help the White Elephant raise money for the Auxiliary and the many programs it supports:

**DONATE.** There are a few things that the White Elephant won’t/can’t accept (large wall units, children’s equipment & furniture, items on recall lists, mattresses manufactured prior to 2012, and life jackets, to name a few) but if in doubt, please call Maria and she can set you straight. And even if your donation might not make it to the store floor, the Auxiliary can benefit from the cash generated through its disposal by the recycling firm. There’s a separate side entrance for donations that faces Naples Boulevard, so you don’t have to lug your precious cargo too far.

**SHOP.** Located on the corner of Naples Boulevard and Pine Ridge Road, you can easily incorporate a trip to the White Elephant on your way to or from many common Naples destinations, including Costco, Waterside Shops, Home Depot, Michaels, and BB&B. So next time you find yourself in the area, please stop in and see what hidden treasures you might find!

**VOLUNTEER.** The White Elephant is always in need of extra hands and energy. If you have a background in retail, interior design or sales or just need an outlet for your creative talents, the White Elephant might just be the place for you!
**Kudos Korner**

**A big round of applause for those who make a difference in our community**

**Your Contributions at Work …**

Through its fund-raising activities & operation of the Gift and White Elephant Thrift Shops, the NCH Auxiliary grants funding to NCH departments for items that enhance the patient experience. At this year’s Appreciation Luncheon, the Auxiliary awarded almost **$60,000** to support patient comfort and education needs throughout the health system.

As you can see, the focus of each departmental grant is quite different — from portable heart monitors to calming blankets — but they all aim to positively impact our patient’s comfort and care.

You can help ensure that the Auxiliary can continue to fund these requests by supporting its fund-raising activities throughout the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT / LOCATION</th>
<th>GRANT DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NE Emergency Department</td>
<td>1 Mini Heart Monitor</td>
<td>Continuously monitor heart function while patient is in transport within the Emergency Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT 5 South - Orthopedics</td>
<td>2 Portable Vital Sign Monitors</td>
<td>Monitor patient vital signs for at-risk patients after surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT Venous Access</td>
<td>1 Venous Ultrasound Device</td>
<td>More accurate needle placement for IV procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT 4 SE Psychiatry</td>
<td>100 Mind over Mood Books 20 Cuddle Wraps</td>
<td>Support emotional needs of patients while on the unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookdale Rehabilitation Services</td>
<td>27 Glow-in-the-Dark Wall Clocks</td>
<td>Keep patients oriented as to the time of day as well as provide a subtle light source during the evenings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPIS</td>
<td>3 Reclining Treatment Lounge Chairs</td>
<td>Provide a comfortable seating option for patients receiving infusion and chemotherapy services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are you in the market for a used car? The White Elephant is expecting a shipment of cars soon.

OR

Are you thinking of donating your used car? The White Elephant gratefully accepts donations of used cars.

Please call Maria Racine at (239) 624-6690 if you are interested in learning more about how to buy or donate a vehicle.

If you’re wearing this button and someone actually asks you what they should do, remember to refer the candidate to apply online at [www.nchmd.org/volunteer](http://www.nchmd.org/volunteer) or call the Volunteer Office at 239 624-3410.

If you don’t yet have a button, please stop by the Volunteer Office to get yours now! Please remember to share the fun and encourage others to volunteer!
**Random thoughts on aging …**

- Am I getting older or has the supermarket begun playing great music?
- I’m not growing older, I’m increasing in value.
- Nothing makes me feel so old as having to scroll down to find my Year of Birth.
- Age is just a number that changes depending on who’s asking

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**Calling all Veterans!**

The NCH Auxiliary is planning a very special event in October to recognize our Volunteering Veterans. To help build our Wall of Fame, we are requesting that our Veterans send in pictures from their GI days. If you have scanned images of your pictures, please send them to Vicki Clagett at victoria.clagett@gmail.com; hard copies can be dropped off the Volunteer Service Office on either campus, marked to the attention of Vicki Clagett.

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**VOLUNTEERS LOOKING FOR NEW CHALLENGES**

If you’re feeling that you want to expand your volunteer footprint by either taking on additional hours /shifts in your current assignment OR exploring brand new areas, please contact your local Volunteer Service Office to learn more.

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**SAVE THE DATE**

It’s hard to believe the summer is more than half over. For those of you who like to manage your calendars far into the future, here are some upcoming events you won’t want to miss:

- **October 24** — **NCH Auxiliary Awards Brunch** to be held at Naples Hilton
- **December 10 & 11** — **Volunteer Holiday Parties** to be held at Naples Hilton

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**Our Volunteers (all 100 of them!) will be leaving us soon! Be sure to let them know how much you appreciate their help this summer!**