L
de their holiday brighter made ours brighter, too! Knowing that we made families in need this year. In total, 37 gaily wrapped presents were delivered to four adults and seven children.

This holiday season, VNA employees joined together to bring a bit of cheer and hope to families in need. Amy Lee, VNA’s Director of Quality Improvement and Clinical Competency, was a key player in making this special holiday happen. Amy’s interest in healthcare began in her childhood, and her passion. Amy graduated from the Samaritan School of Nursing, and started her career in a staff nurse and nursing supervisor at several rural hospitals. In 1998, Amy became Program Director of Hospice Manor in Troy, and her focus began to expand. In this role, she worked on fostering collaboration among departments to improve care. Rather than each department operating in a vacuum, Amy developed policies and procedures to improve care coordination. In 2003, Amy was appointed Director of Quality Initiatives and Clinical Development for Capital District Hospice and Palliative Care. This position gave her the opportunity to be involved in working together to achieve the goal of continual quality improvement and clinical competency.

In 2009, Amy joined the Board of Directors for VNA Health. As a board member, Amy is also a vital part of the organization and its operations. If you know was how far nursing would take her. What she didn’t know was that nursing would take Amy far away from home, but it has taken Amy Lee light years to return home to Johnsonville, where she grew up and still lives.

After working with Capital District Hospice, Amy returned to college and attained a Master’s degree in 2012. Overwhelmed? We can help. We know that caring for a loved one at home can be rewarding, but difficult. Find out more about the professional services we provide. Thank you for your recent gifts to the VNA Foundation For their recent gifts to the VNA Foundation Board Profile: Amy Lee

The Spirit of Giving This holiday season, VNA employees joined together to bring cheer to four fortunate families and their families. Through the Mary Demos Holiday Family Fund, 58 patients received $4,300 in gift cards. Plus, our wonderful staff purchased Christmas gifts for families in need this year. In total, 27 gifts were presented to 58 patients and caregivers on disease process, environmental triggers, and self-management. The word cardiopulmonary refers to both the heart and lungs. Patients with a diagnosis of congestive heart failure (CHF), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, coronary artery disease (CAD), and chronic paren-

SPECIALTY CARE RNs Provide Education & Expertise As you know, VNA Home Health offers a wide range of comprehensive services and programs to its patients, including skilled nursing, occupational and physical rehabilitation, medical social work. VNA’s services and programs are designed to keep patients living at home. But what you may not realize is that the VNA also employs regional nursing leaders who provide clinical expertise and oversight in areas such as: cardiopulmonary disease, diabetes, infusion therapy, wound care and ostomy.

Why is it so important to have specialists who are experts in these specific conditions? The answer is simple – by focusing on the management of these problems as soon as the patient arrives home, we can achieve better patient outcomes and smoother care transitions, and avoid hospital readmission. For patients with cardiopulmonary disease, or those awaiting surgery or just returning home after surgery, the services provided by VNA Home Health’s specialty care nurses are invaluable.

The word cardiopulmonary refers to both the heart and lungs. Patients with a diagnosis of congestive heart failure (CHF), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, coronary artery disease (CAD), and chronic paren-

Community

Fig. 3 50 years of Service for RN

Fig. 4 Employee News & Notes

Fig. 5 Board Profile, Amy Lee
Dear Friends,

March has certainly come in like a lion, and like you, I’m very much looking forward to warmer weather in the near future! With spring coming flowers, sunshine, and the chance to finally shed your coat and get outside. Everyone should have the opportunity to fully experience this wonderful time of year. That’s why all of us at VNA Home Health are laser-focused on keeping our patients healthy and at home.

In this issue of VNA Community, you’ll find out how our specialty care nurses provide the education, care, and training needed to keep patients with cardiopulmonary conditions healthy and out of the hospital. You’ll read about our longest-tenured nurse, Sue Caesar, who has devoted her entire career to our agency, and now ensures that patients being discharged from Albany Medical Center experience a smooth and uneventful transition back home. And you’ll get to know one of our new board members, Amy Lee, who has made it her business to improve healthcare quality and reduce hospital readmissions.

Caring for patients at home and reducing hospital stays is much more than a trend – it’s a critical component of today’s healthcare landscape. And we’re committed to being a part of that future. The key to successful home care is good communication – communication that enables us to meet our patients’ needs. We will continue to focus on providing excellent care to our patients and their families. We will continue to provide the education, care, and support that our patients need to live their lives as fully as possible.

VNA Employee News & Notes

Sue started with the VNA as an “evening nurse,” becoming the first RN to work from noon to 8:00 PM. When Sue was pregnant with her first child, she and another nurse created a job description that enabled them both to work part-time hours while ensuring continuity for their patients. Sue commends the VNA for allowing her the flexibility of sharing a job for several years while she spent time with her four children. When Sue returned to work full-time, she spent almost ten years in a long-term care program working with patients with chronic conditions.

Nurse Dedicates Her Career to VNA

T
n today’s job market, spending your entire career at the same place is almost unheard of. Unless of course, you work for VNA Home Health. For Sue Caesar, the VNA has been her employer for 35 years, making her our longest-tenured employee. And we would welcome her to stay for another few decades!

Sue has been one of our RN Home Care Coordinators at Albany Medical Center for six years now, working closely with AMC staff to successfully transition patients from the hospital to home. The coordinator may be given less than a day’s notice that a patient is being discharged, so efficiency and communication are key. According to one of Sue’s colleagues, she is a “tougher” in this role, preparing patients for discharge, coordinating with medical staff, and working with insurance payers to ensure a smooth transition for the patient, their families, and caregivers. For Sue, this work is very rewarding, and she loves her job and her patients.

Like many registered nurses, Sue never considered being a nurse when she was young. There are generations of doctors and nurses in her family. She grew up near to Samaritan Nursing School to get her B.N. After a few years of working at University at Albany, Sue worked at the former Child’s Hospital for just over a year, followed by St. Peter’s Hospital for a year. She then joined our agency, known at that time as the Visiting Nurse Association of Albany.

Sue returned to work full-time, she spent almost ten years in a long-term care program working with patients with chronic conditions that VNA specialty care nurses are trained to address, from heart transplant, to narcotic valve replacement, to fluid build-up resulting from cancer or liver disease. Whatever the diagnosis, our patients can rest assured that VNA Home Health nurses will, through their expertise, strive to ensure they are able to remain safely at home.

Sue has been an RN for over 35 years. She started her career at Samaritan Medical Center, then transferred to Albany Medical Center, where she worked for several years. Sue has been with our agency for over 35 years, and is one of the longest-tenured nurses on our staff. She is a true and caring nurse, always putting her patients first. We are so appreciative of Sue for her many dedicated years of service!