

## **Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard FAQs**

### **What is the Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard?**

The Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard celebrates the life and work of each nurse in the Muskegon area by offering tribute at the funeral or memorial service of area nurses who have passed away. We also offer living tributes to nurses at the end of life.

### **What is a nurse honor guard tribute?**

The tribute may vary based on family requests and service. Most commonly, the nurse honor guard tribute takes place at the end of a funeral or memorial service. The guard files in reverently with a lantern which is lit in honor of the nurse. The Nightingale tribute is read and the nurse is called to duty three times. When he or she does not answer the call, a chime is rung, the lantern is extinguished, and the nurse is officially released from earthly duties. The lantern is given to the family as a memorial and a single white rose is placed at the casket or remains to symbolize the nurse's dedication to the nursing profession.

### **What is a living nurse honor guard tribute?**

A living tribute may be requested for a nurse in palliative or hospice care. The nurse honor guard will visit the nurse and read a tribute at the bedside. A chime is rung in honor of years of service, a white rose is given to the nurse, and he or she is wrapped in a blanket of honor. This is a special time to reminisce about the career of a nursing colleague.

### **Who does the Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard serve?**

Nurse honor guard tributes may be requested for active or retired APRNs, RNs, or LPNs who have passed away in the Muskegon area. Our goal is to honor all tribute requests within 60 miles of Muskegon, primarily Grand Haven to Ludington.

### **How would I request a tribute from the nurse honor guard?**

If you or someone you know would like to request a nurse honor guard tribute, please contact Kristina Forman at 231-578-1192 or Kim Mason at 231-215-6370. If you are a nurse and would like a nurse honor guard at your service, include that request in your will, estate planning, and discussions with family.

### **How can I learn more about the Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard?**

While nurse honor guards have been offering tribute to fallen nurses throughout the United States since 2003, the Muskegon chapter was assembled in May of 2021. You can address any questions or thoughts about the Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard to Kristina or Kim at [manursehonorguard@gmail.com](mailto:manursehonorguard@gmail.com) and follow us on Facebook at [Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard | Facebook](#)

### **Who can volunteer in the nurse honor guard?**

Any licensed nurse, active or retired, including APRNs, RNs, and LPNs. We currently have 175 volunteers representing all levels of licensure and education. The Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard includes nurses from acute care, skilled nursing facilities, private practices, home care, hospice, and corrections facilities as well as retirees. Most volunteers participate in memorial or living tributes, but there are

many opportunities to serve the honor guard by sewing capes, involvement in community events, or monetary support.

### **How would I connect with an honor guard outside of the Muskegon area?**

If you would like to request a tribute for a nurse outside of the Muskegon area, or are interested in serving in an honor guard in another community, please contact Kim Mason at 231-215-6370 or [manursehonorguard@gmail.com](mailto:manursehonorguard@gmail.com). Kim is the coordinator for the Michigan nurse honor guards and will also have a directory for other states.

### **What is the commitment to volunteer in the nurse honor guard?**

Meetings are not required for the nurse honor guard. Volunteers are asked to participate in tributes at funerals and memorial services when they are able and supply their own white uniform and transportation to services. Most volunteers are willing to carpool as well. You may occasionally be asked to pick up the white rose at Flowers By Ray and Sharon. We understand that everyone has obligations to family, work, and self. You will not be able to attend all tributes- that is expected and respected, no excuse is needed.

### **How does someone sign up for the Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard?**

If you or someone you know is a nurse and would like to volunteer in the Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard, complete the Google form application at this link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc7FRrs1LIVPgQ87gNE8RQmX-mVgmJerjulSVoci4kKgiRZw/viewform?usp=sharing>

### **Will I have to speak at a tribute?**

No. No one will have to read or speak publicly if they are not comfortable.

### **What is the orientation process?**

Nurse honor guard tributes are short and not complicated. No formal training is needed. Prior to each tribute, we send out a script and a video link to a previous tribute so that everyone is comfortable.

### **Does it cost anything to be in the nurse honor guard?**

Honor guard volunteers are responsible for the cost of their uniform and transportation. The Muskegon Area Nurse Honor Guard is grateful for sponsorship from Flowers By Ray and Sharon who provide the roses for services and Muskegon Community College for providing printing services. We are also very grateful for generous support from Trinity Muskegon Nursing Administration and Philanthropy departments who have sponsored start-up costs, lanterns, and celebration dinners.

While the honor guard is not an especially expensive program, we are always grateful for any donations. If you would like to sponsor the honor guard with a monetary donation, please contact our treasurer, Sheila Hamilton, at 231-288-4410. You may also donate through Venmo at Kim-MANHG Mason@Kimberlee-Mason-2. The last four digits of Kim's phone number is 6370.

### **How will I be notified of an honor guard tribute?**

When a nurse honor guard tribute is requested, Kim Mason will send a “call to service” email to all volunteers to see who is able to attend. You only need to reply if you want to participate. Notifications will also be sent in the BAND app. Once we have established who will be attending, we will coordinate the details of when and where to assemble the guard.

### **What is the nurse honor guard uniform?**

Women: White dress or skirt, hose, shoes and cap. Shoes should be appropriate for work (flat or very low heel). Keep jewelry modest and hair pulled back. Caps are white but traditionally stripes were added based on school and rank. You may add stripes per your alma mater, wear your own cap if you have one, or leave it plain white. Nursing pins may be worn but are not required.

Capes are similar to the traditional cape of the American Red Cross nurse. Unfortunately, they cannot be purchased commercially and have to be made. Volunteers may borrow a cape for a tribute or purchase a cape from the guard at cost which is \$75. Production of the capes takes time as they are sewn individually. If you wish to purchase a cape, please be patient as there may be a wait.

Men: White pants, white belt, white button-front shirt, and white shoes.

All: The honor guard will follow CDC recommendations for masks. White masks are provided if they are needed.

### **Do the capes come in different sizes?**

Capes are basically one size fits all. Because they are flowing and only clasp loosely at the neck, they are fitting ladies size S to 3X.

### **How can I purchase a cape?**

Capes may be purchased at our cost, \$75. You may either mail a check (note MANHG Cape in the memo) to our treasurer, Sheila Hamilton at 956 Green Creek Rd., Muskegon, MI 49445 or you may pay via Venmo at Kim-MANHG Mason@Kimberlee-Mason-2. You may need to enter the last four digits of Kim’s phone number which is 6370.