



Amy Miley-House

Question: What do William Wordsworth (the poet), Margaret Court (the tennis player), and Marilyn vos Savant (who has the world's highest recorded IQ) have in common with Amy Miley-House, one of the Reception volunteers at Doey's House?

Answer: Their names are aptronyms, names which reflect the occupation of the name holder.

Amy Miley-House volunteers in the reception area at Doey's House, the Hospice of Washington County inpatient unit, where physicians, nurses, counselors, social workers and volunteers work together to support patients and families.

The same woman who greets visitors, asks them to sign the guest book, and directs them to their loved ones was also intimately responsible for creating the serene atmosphere which envelops them.

She is an interior designer at BFM Architects, the firm that designed Doey's House. Her husband is an architect at the firm. She selected the finishes and furniture. "Through the process, I learned more about what hospice is about, and it really tugged at my heart," she says. During that time, she also had a family member who experienced hospice care.

So when the doors to Doey's House opened in October 2017, she became a volunteer. "I felt Doey's House was such a wonderful aspect of the community, and I wanted to stay involved," she says.

Due to safety precautions related to the Covid pandemic, some of rooms in the house, like the large family room and some small meeting areas, have been closed. She looks forward to the day when the building can be used to its full capacity again. "Still, it's gratifying when I hear people comment positively about the building itself."

Doey's House is looking for more volunteers. "It is very gratifying. The shifts are four hours long, so anybody can do it," Amy says.

A designer from the start

Amy's interest in designing houses started at a young age. "I always loved arranging furniture. We had a sandbox, and I would bring doll furniture out to the sandbox and set up rooms. That's an early form of space planning! I quickly integrated putting colors together and shaping interior spaces for houses and buildings of all sorts."

When she is not working and volunteering, Amy is a big reader and she has amassed an extensive library. A nature lover, she and her family like to hike and camp. Over the past few years, they've gone through a few large campers, kind of a home-away-from-home for the Houses. One especially memorable trip was a 20-day venture out west with time in Yellowstone, Mt Rushmore and a stop in St. Louis to see The Gateway Arch.

The Miley-Houses are in the process of moving into a new house, closer to nature, so Amy will get to continue to honor her aptronym and create a nourishing home for her family.