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Celebrated photographer adds natural beauty to MHC

The Memorial Hospital of Carbondale auxiliary recently placed in the hospital many uplifting photos by celebrated photographer Elaine Poggi. Poggi, a Sparta native, turned a personal tragedy into The Foundation for Photo/Art in Hospitals, a worldwide organization dedicated to bringing “light, color, soothing images, comfort and hope to patients and their families in hospitals around the globe,” she said.

The Foundation was founded after Poggi spent three months visiting her mother in Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis. Poggi, who has lived in Florence, Italy, for the past 30 years, found her mother’s hospital room to be stark and uninviting. Her love of photography prompted her to frame several of her prints and hang them in her mother’s hospital room. The photos soon became conversation pieces among guests, doctors and staff. Poggi’s

mother eventually lost her fight with non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma but called her daughter’s artwork her “last bit of beauty.”

Poggi returned to Florence with a mission. She purchased a better camera and began snapping nature scenes she knew would be sure to lift the spirits of hospital patients and their families. Soon The Foundation for Photo/Art in Hospitals was born.

Poggi, founder and president of the nonprofit, publicly supported organization, now has photos on display at approximately 1,500 hospitals throughout the United States, Italy, Japan, Canada, Switzerland and Africa including recently acquired prints at Memorial Hospital of Carbondale. She visited MHC after her photos were installed and called hospitals “the biggest museums in the world.” Her photos adorn patient rooms and hallways on the fourth floor.

Poggi enjoys working with hospitals. “I’m touched by the people at the hospitals, whether it be employees, doctors or volunteer staff. I see their willingness to always put patients first,” she said.



Elaine Poggi, photographer, shows her photo of an African beach to Peggy Henson, director, volunteer services, MHC, and Karen Weisenstein, co-president, MHC Auxiliary.

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