

PARTNERS OF WHA is committed to advocating for the health of our communities and advancing the success of local health care volunteer organizations, through the coordination and provision of volunteer education, development resources, and leadership opportunities for health care volunteers and their organizations.

A Message from the Partners of WHA President

Convention was Doable



Peg Larson

Thank you to everyone who was able to participate in the convention! While we all would have preferred to be together in person, it was great to see faces and to get to talk to each other. Our speakers were excellent. They brought great information for us to use every day. The CEO Panel was exceptional as always. It was so nice to celebrate all of our award recipients.

Thank you especially to Convention Chair Terri Donlin and WHA Liaison Leigh Ann Larson who collaborated to convert our in-person plans to a virtual format in 31 days. Instead of having attendees use separate links to log in again, we were able to use a new breakout feature of Microsoft Teams for the workshops.

I would like to mention the cost associated with the cancellation of the in-person venue. Standard meeting contracts include a cancellation penalty so the venue has confidence in their revenue stream when contracting workers and purchasing supplies. The Madison Marriott West has very graciously agreed to replace the contract for convention this fall with contracts for our spring board meeting at the end of February and for an event May 3-5. Those contracts cut our liability by more than half.

We need your help to determine what that event will look like. At our convention, we missed the vendors, displays, silent auction, and raffles. Some of our workshops would not work as well in the virtual space. Shopping for your gift shop/kiosk is not the same in a virtual space as in person. On the other hand, a virtual component of whatever we plan may help individuals feel comfortable participating. If you have ideas for the components of this event, please let Peg Larson or Terri Donlin know what information and format you would participate in. If you are willing to help with the development or execution of the event, Terri will be delighted to have your assistance.

Thank you for your continued participation and support of Partners of WHA. May you stay well.

Peg Larson

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A Message from the President-Elect

Successful Convention

Writing this article on a beautiful October day, two days removed from our 2021 convention, I'm still in awe at what appeared to be an insurmountable and extremely overwhelming task, literally 33 plus days prior, transitioned into an amazingly successful convention for our Partners organization. Thank you to all the Partners and DVS attendees, speakers, CEO panelists, workshop presenters, award recipients, and most especially, Terri Donlin, convention chair and Leigh Ann Larson, Partners of WHA liaison. It was wonderful to see you during convention and really reenergized my commitment to Partners of WHA.

Navigating through the challenges and changes of the past 18 plus months has called upon every organization's creativity, determination, and resilience as they seek a "new" normal to move forward and maintain communication with their members. Virtuality has become the new mode of being together as well as conducting fundraising events and meetings at both the local and district levels. While many local organizations have been given the "cautious green light" to resume in-house volunteer activities, many remain inactive. Not to be deterred, in-home Partners projects have seen a tremendous uptick, drive-through



Sharon Scott

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A Message from the President-Elect...cont'd. from page 1

recognitions and fundraisers have been enormously successful, and the willfulness spirit of volunteers with vitality, viability, and virtuality continue to maintain the legacy of our Partners of WHA organization.

Traditionally, by-laws updates are presented during convention. It seems prudent that a “pause” has been given for 2021. Over the winter months, work will resume. An interesting topic for reinstating “at large member” will be reviewed.

GENTLE REMINDER - Honor Points will be awarded during Spring Tour 2022. Please visit the [Partners website](#) for the new form. Completed forms are due MARCH 1 to the state president-elect.

Partners is a unique group of individuals serving their health care facilities and communities with their gifts of time and talent. Let us continue to CELEBRATE the creativity, tenaciousness, and opportunities that Partners of WHA provides.

In closing, I realize in a matter of six weeks the traditional start of the holidays will be upon us. May I extend my personal blessings that your celebrations will be joyful, full of many blessings, and healthy.

Sharon Scott

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Strategic Planning Committee Report

The Strategic Planning Committee met in October 2021 to review and update goals developed in spring of 2021.

Leigh Ann Larson and Peg Larson reported on the virtual table that Partners had for Advocacy Day 2021. This could be repeated for Advocacy Day 2022 once a decision is made whether to have it virtually or in person.

Sue Schuelke and Judy Jaggard developed a self-interest form for volunteers. The form has been posted on the [website](#) for use at all levels (local, district, and state) and sent to district chairs for discussion at district meetings. Follow-up evaluation is planned for spring of 2022.

Bill McCullough and Sharon Scott reported that the goal of further defining leadership qualities, defining mentor responsibilities, and updating mentor lists was accomplished with presentation of these at spring district meetings. In September, documents were sent to district chairs clarifying mentors' roles. These were also sent to mentors to assist with documentation of contact history. Evaluation will continue as information is received from mentors/mentees. Continuation of the mentor program is needed to fill gaps resulting from COVID restrictions of the past year—no in-person meetings at local, district, or state levels and the absence of face-to-face conversations with other leaders.

An orientation form for new volunteers, completed by John Tully and Julie Steiner, was presented to the committee. It explains opportunities for participation on committees and events at the district and state levels. The form will go to local organizations. Sharon Scott presented this at her district chair meeting.

Peg Larson and Leigh Ann Larson reported the process is in place to update the list of volunteers who should receive the *Reaching Out* newsletter.

Sherry Jelic stated that during the virtual *Volunteers in Healthcare Regional Conference*, participants from Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and North Dakota discussed challenges for volunteers returning after the pandemic. Volunteers are realizing just how much has changed. Their roles may be different, safety considerations change, and some volunteers have reconsidered their roles and commitment and decided not to return in the same capacity, or not at all.

Looking to the future of planning at all levels of Partners, we may be faced with some of the following questions. How will we navigate the newness and continuing change? What activities will supply value and gratification to returning volunteers? What will our new impact be as volunteers?

Thank you to each member of our committee for their continued work and commitment to the success of our organization!

Sherry Jelic, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee
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*I don't always go the extra mile, but
when I do it's because I missed my exit!*

Cheers to a Great Convention!



Leigh Ann Larson

After much consideration and thought, the Partners of WHA Board of Directors voted to transition the October annual convention to a virtual platform. With the relentless Delta COVID-19 variant spreading across our state, and infecting even fully vaccinated individuals, this decision was

made out of general concern for people's health and safety. Given the timing, this made the transition plans fast and furious! Terri Donlin, 2021 Convention Chair, took the lead and made it happen. Was it perfect? No. However, overall, the virtual convention was a great success. There were many highlights, but, one in particular was keynote speaker Darcy Luoma. Darcy's message and practical approach to being "Thoughtfully Fit" resonated with attendees and started convention out on an exciting note. As always, the breakout sessions were well attended and informative. Partners members were happy to see Jennifer Frank, former WHA vice president of education and marketing, back with a great presentation on "Strategic Planning." WHA Vice President of Advocacy Kari Hofer delighted the group once again with her message of grassroots advocacy and involvement.

The real stars, however, of convention were all of you! Your flexibility, patience, and willingness to embrace a virtual convention were vital to its success. Thank you so much for your attendance and participation.

Plans are already underway for WHA educational programming for 2022. This includes Advocacy Day. Whether virtual or in-person, please plan on attending the next **Advocacy Day on Wednesday, March 23, 2022.**

Happy fall!

Leigh Ann S. Larson; Email: llarson@wha.org
WHA Vice President of Education and Marketing,
Executive Director of the WHA Foundation
Partners of WHA Liaison

John Russell Selected for Best of the Best Award for 2021

First of all, I want to thank Partners of WHA for allowing me to be the chair for the Best of the Best award this year. Other members of the Committee consisted of Kay Lydwig, North Central District; Melanie Miller, Southern District; Trudy Wallin, Western District; Timothy McKeve, 2019 BOB Award recipient; and Leigh Ann Larson, Partners of WHA Liaison.

It is our pleasure to announce John Russell, CEO of Prairie Ridge Health, Columbus, WI as the winner of the Best of Best Administrative Award for 2021. John has a vast career in leadership in the medical field. He was nominated by the Volunteers of Prairie Ridge Health.

The nomination stated that they are a successful volunteer organization because of John's support. "John saw the importance of our position not only to the patients, but also the importance of the positive experience for our volunteers. This was a huge boost to our volunteer group. His efforts, in the face of a national health crisis, shows his long-term commitment to the volunteer group and the work that they do."

On behalf of Partners of WHA and the Best of the Best Committee, congratulations for a job well done.

Beverly Lazar, Best of the Best Committee Chair,
Northwestern District
715-492-6572; Email: lazar_beverly@yahoo.com



John Russell, CEO of Prairie Ridge Health in Columbus receives the 2021 Partners Best of the Best Administrative Award

To make a difference in someone's life, you don't have to be brilliant, rich, beautiful, or perfect. You just have to care.

WAVE Award Presented at Convention

There were 13 submissions for the WAVE award in 2021. Applications were sent to Leigh Ann Larson, Partners of WHA Liaison, who reviewed the applications to ensure that all requirements were met. After verifying acceptance, Leigh Ann Larson mailed them to the committee members along with the guidelines for scoring.

The WAVE Committee had a teleconference to select the winners. Each member provided their scores by category for each program. The WAVE committee chose winners by assigning the program a certain number of points. Leigh Ann totaled the scores and the winners were determined.

We did not receive any submissions in the new category: Public Policy and Advocacy. Winners in each category were:

Community Service Program:

Friends of Vernon Memorial Healthcare, Viroqua, WI
"FIRST BREATH GIFT BASKET"

In Service Program:

Aspirus Volunteers of Medford, Medford, WI
"SWITCH'N IT UP!"

Fundraising Program:

Mercyhealth Association of Volunteers, Janesville, WI
"RE TAG IT"

Community Outreach and/or Collaboration Program:

Volunteers of Prairie Ridge Health, Columbus, WI
"HUNGER CARE PROGRAM"

Following the selection of the winners, the chair personally called the contact person in each organization to inform them of their award. They were asked who would be accepting the award virtually during the WHA convention meeting October 5, 2021. Plaques were then shipped to the winners so they could have them in hand at the virtual WHA Convention Meeting for acceptance.

Emails were sent to those who applied but did not win. They were thanked for their participation and encouraged, if desired, to submit the program in another year.

Many thanks to the WAVE Award Committee: Sandy Gobler, West Central District; Linda Nandory, Western District; Diane Schmidt, Southern District; and Lea Ann Larson, WHA.

Jeanne Tatro, WAVE Chair



Friends of Vernon Memorial Healthcare with their 2021 WAVE plaque



Volunteers of Prairie Ridge Health with their 2021 WAVE plaque



Mercyhealth Association of Volunteers 2021 WAVE



Kay Ludwig received the WAVE on behalf of Aspirus Volunteers of Medford

WHA Launches *Patients First Wisconsin* Advocacy Initiative to Put an End to a Practice Known as “White Bagging”

By: [Kari Hofer](#), Vice President of Advocacy, WHA

Some health insurers are implementing new policies that limit patient choice and access to care for critical specialty medications administered by health care professionals. One practice known as “white bagging” is having significant detrimental effects to patient safety and is delaying care for patients.

The Wisconsin Hospital Association and the Hospitals Education & Advocacy Team (HEAT) launched Patients First Wisconsin, an advocacy initiative aimed at stopping the dangerous practice in Wisconsin.

White bagging is the practice of disallowing a provider from procuring and managing the handling of a drug used in patient care. Instead, a third-party specialty pharmacy is used to dispense the drug and sends it to the hospital to administer. This creates delays and interruptions in critical treatments and compromised medication safety.

According to a recent report from Vizient Health, 83% of hospitals surveyed said that specialty medications delivered to them for patient administration through white bagging did not arrive on time, and another 66% of hospitals said that they have received the wrong dose.

States across the country have enacted laws that prohibit this practice, and WHA is leading the effort in Wisconsin. Visit [Patients First Wisconsin](#) for information and resources, real stories from Wisconsin patients and providers, and opportunities to take immediate action on this issue.

Visit [PatientsFirstWisconsin.com](#) for more information.

Updates and resources on public policy issues that impact Wisconsin hospitals and health systems are sent out via the HEAT network. If you are not already a HEAT member, sign up online at www.wha.org/ActionCenter.



WANTED: YOUR VOICE



HEAT

HOSPITALS EDUCATION
& ADVOCACY TEAM

Stay informed and join thousands of others in standing up for affordable, accessible, high-quality health care in Wisconsin.

Save the Date: WHA's Advocacy Day

Advocacy Day is just four months away! Save the date now for a day of learning and advocacy in action among 1,000 other hospital employees, trustees, and volunteers. The event will be held on March 23, 2022. More information on the event, including whether it will be held virtual or in person, and how to register coming soon!



www.wha.org/AdvocacyDay

Public Policy Education Report



Bill McCullough

The CEO Panel discussions from past conventions have continually offered important insight to the workings of our health care system, particularly in Wisconsin. This year's panel was no exception as each panelist thoughtfully responded to questions submitted by our volunteer members. In this article, I have attempted to capture the essence of a number of those responses.

WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding started off with a brief summary of the results from some of his 20 hospital visits during the pandemic. He stated, "I was heartened by the quality of our hospital leaders and the importance of the public policy role, the calm, cool poised responses made in the face of COVID."

Question: Staffing for COVID admissions has been a challenge; how were you able to staff for the "normal" medical services, and have you experienced retirements from the nursing population?"

Responses: Cross-trained for supportive work streams, created four-hour extra shifts, carved back some surgical procedures, shared gratitude throughout staffing cycle with support of front-line first, transfer of patients to free up needed COVID beds, evidence of flexibility in professional staff in delaying retirement, meeting the challenge of clinical staff going to agencies for more money and less stress—a major concern, evolution of staffing agencies, "a Cannibalistic Circle" of hiring back trained professional staff services to hospitals at twice the cost of normal wages, the challenge of non-professional support staff hired by retail firms for \$40 per hour, second shifts, some movement of nurses to ambulatory setting, and the anxiety of "when will it end?" has created a wave of professionals going to other health-care services or leaving the profession entirely without a pipeline of younger nurses entering the career.

1. **Question:** What can be done to expand the population of a diminishing professional resource of qualified nursing professionals?

Responses: There is a need to inform and educate those in high schools and career academies about nursing as a "calling," and highlight this critical career. In times past, the "Sisters" created a Mission Motivated Message in their schools, need to create career tracts, and offer tuition reimbursement. Importantly, there has been a decreased number of educators in this profession, resulting in over 500 qualified nursing candidates in Wisconsin turned away from health care education in the last few years.

2. **Question:** During the pandemic, has your leadership style changed, and if so how? What didn't change?

Responses: For each panelist, the concept of "Power of Presence, the Relational Person," was shared. Many of the "management team" became those who cleaned the ER rooms, leading by example took on a more intense and sustainable definition and the example of the "servant leader" to the organization.

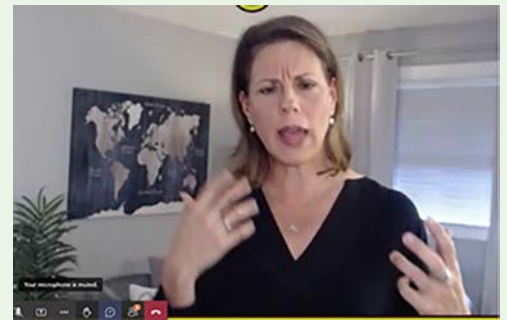
3. **Question:** The Partners organization of dedicated volunteers is waiting, somewhat impatiently to return to their in-hospital duties. How do you see that picture developing, and possible limitations of involvement?

Responses: "Direct volunteer involvement reinforces the purpose and fulfillment of the work I do," stated Eric Borgerding. "The safety for those volunteers returning is the key. There will likely be more emphasis on identifying and meeting community needs with emphasis on a safe environment, i.e.: the sewing of volumes of masks by volunteer groups; upon returning volunteers will be met with a feeling of gratefulness by the entire hospital culture."

Bill McCullough, PPE Chair

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Partners of WHA 2021
Convention Keynote
Speaker Darcy Louma



Community Health Education Report



Sue Schuelke

With autumn comes colorful trees, apples, pumpkins, and...the seasonal flu. Yes, it is here and has the potential to make matters worse with the coronavirus still present, creating what is being termed a “twin-demic.” Getting vaccinated for the seasonal flu is the key to reducing the risk of severe illness this winter. It is safe to receive the seasonal flu vaccine at the same time you receive a COVID-19 vaccine or booster dose.

This quarter, Series 2 of Infectious Diseases will cover Pneumonia and Meningitis. Both can occur as viral or bacterial illnesses. Specific information will be posted on the Partners of WHA website, under the Health Education tab.

The CHE Special Interest Meeting during the Partners of WHA Convention was held virtually this year and well attended. An update regarding the COVID-19 pandemic was shared along with how we can improve or maintain our immunity to infectious disease, and what topics on infectious diseases will be covered in the upcoming months. Some attendees shared how the COVID -19 crisis continues to impact their volunteer work, many still having activities on hold. Vaccine mandates have been put in place to include a large number of health care volunteers.

As we get close to the end of 2021, let's hope there is good news to show the COVID-19 pandemic will be behind us soon and we can look forward to a new year with less fear and uncertainty!

Wishing you happy, healthy holidays ahead!

Sue Schuelke, CHE Chair

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Applications For Candidates Being Solicited

IN ACCORDANCE WITH Partners of WHA bylaws 7, Article 7.3 (a):

Except as otherwise expressly provided in these bylaws, the President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected biennially at the Annual Meeting. No officer shall be elected as an officer without first having served on the Board of Directors for at least one (1) year. (7.2)

Applications for the positions of President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer, to be elected at the October 2022 convention, are being solicited. Incumbent members must also submit a form. The questionnaire for potential officers can be found on the Partners of WHA website (partnersofwha.org) under Resource Center – forms. This form needs to be completed to seek a position on the Partners executive board.

Qualified applications will be accepted until March 1, 2022.

Please send completed form to:

Jan Molaska
216 N 36th Ave
Wausau, WI 54401

Or email to jmolaska@gmail.com

Members of the Nominating Committee elected at the October 2021 convention are:

- Jaci Fuller, Eau Claire – West Central District
- Ann Korb, Chilton – Lakes District
- Melanie Miller, Stoughton – Southern District
- Sharon Scott, President-Elect – serves as a non-voting member of the committee

An organization is only as strong as its leaders. Please consider stepping up into a leadership role.

Around the State

Oconomowoc Auxiliary and Volunteer Services, Oconomowoc:

A food drive, in partnership with Fleet Farm, was held and proved to be a huge success. They donated food to the Oconomowoc Food Pantry. Kwik Trip generously donated \$200 in cash to be used to buy items. On May 6, baskets filled with snacks and treats were delivered for National Nurses Week. Also, another 24 Veteran Baskets were donated to their local VFW. Good job in helping your community!

Aspirus Volunteers, Wausau:

In August, four ladies and their four male caddies golfed in the annual Aspirus Golf Classic in Wausau. All teams dressed themselves and their carts up. The proceeds this year went to Reach Out and Read, mammograms and breast health-related diagnostic services for women and men with cost concerns, and The Aspirus Family House for those who must travel to Wausau for specialty care and who need a safe and affordable place to stay. Another wonderful way to support your community!

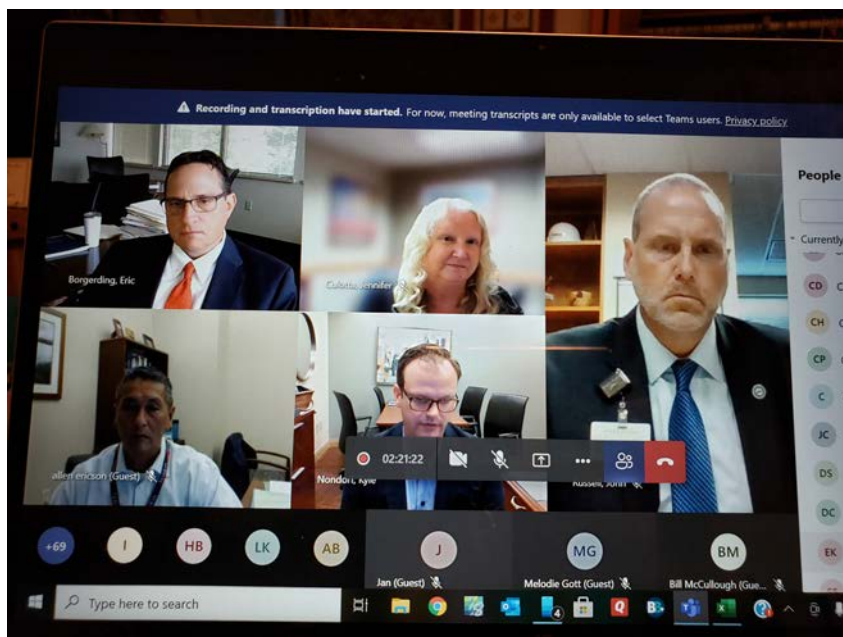
Ripon Medical Center Auxiliary, Ripon:

Volunteer sewers make walker bags, wheelchair bags, catheter bags, mastectomy pillows, fidget quilts, and fidget sleeves. Donations of yarn and fabric are always needed! Also, a new gift shop item is available – a facemask/eyeglasses lanyard. These lovely and trendy beaded lanyards are a comfortable and convenient way to keep your facemask handy, or you can use it to keep your glasses close at hand.

Kay Lyndahl, Editor

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(Please note that I will be in Florida as of Nov. 1, 2021, for those of you who mail me your newsletter, as per the green box on this page.)



The CEO panel at the Partners of WHA Convention 2021.

Reaching Out Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
February 2022	Sat. Jan. 15, 2022
May 2022	Tues., April 12, 2022
August 2022	Fri., July 15, 2022
November 2022	Wed., Oct. 12, 2022

Partners *Reaching Out* is published four times a year by Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc. Visit the Partners website at www.partnersofwha.org. Direct questions or comments to:

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You don't realize how old you are until you sit on the floor and then try to get back up.