



Flambeau Hospital Auxiliary President's Newsletter, Spring 2017

- At the FHA Annual Meeting on Monday, January 9th, the following officers were installed: Treasurer Carolyn Herbst, Vice President Marilee Lealos, Secretary Amy Hulbert, and President Ginny Bosse. The installation ceremony was performed by FHA Past President Arlene Morrison, who is also our Northwestern District Treasurer. Elected in December to three-year terms on the Board of Directors were Mary Lou Cuddeback, Mary Erickson, and Deb Nowak. Continuing for two more years on the Board are Carol Boettcher, Sandy Dane, and Cheryl Szymik. Continuing for one more year are Erika Carden, Rhea Lucht, and Annie Weishan. Thank you to all of our Board members for their service to our organization!
- ***Salad Luncheon, Wednesday, May 17th from 11:00-1:00:*** The decision was made to give up to \$6,000 in Scholarships again in 2017. Our annual Salad Luncheon fundraiser for scholarships has been bringing in about \$1000 in each recent year. Our hope is to do even better at this year's Salad Luncheon, which will be held from 11:00 to 1:00 on Wednesday, May 17th at the Padua Center of St. Anthony's Catholic Church. As always, there will be over fifty different salads plus deviled eggs, white, whole wheat, and rye dinner rolls, pickles and olives, and dessert bars with which to fill your plate. Beverages choices include coffee, milk, water, lemonade and flavored iced teas. Tickets are still only \$6.00, which provides you a wonderful meal and a chance to win a Door Prize! *Be sure to say yes when you get the call for salads or other donations, or to be a worker that day. The Salad Luncheon can't happen without your help!* If you somehow are missed by the callers, but are willing and able to help out that day, please call me (715-762-3193) and let me know when you would be available. Or, you can stop at the Thrift Shop and put your name on the list at the counter. (We especially need workers during the 10:00-noon setup and first hour serving time!) However, if you are an auxiliary member who can no longer leave home for health reasons, just call me at 762-3193 by 8:30 the night before, and I'll do my best to have your lunch delivered to you!

Tickets for the Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association's annual raffle will be for sale at the Salad Luncheon. There are dozens of prizes to be won, including \$200 cash, an Amish quilt, and themed baskets put together by each of the seven Partners districts. (You may have seen the pictures of FHA's three prize winners in the winter FHA newsletter!) Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00.

- ***Mini Medic Days*** were held on Wednesday, April 19th and Friday, April 21st. On each of those dates, about 60 area second-graders and home-schooled kids visited Flambeau Hospital for a tour of the various departments. Thank you to Sue Karpus, Cheryl Szymik, Rhea Lucht, and Carol Forward for coordinating this program for many, many years!
- ***The Babysitting Clinic*** will be held on Tuesday-Wednesday, May 9-10th from 4:00-7:00 at the Murphy Building. During the two three-hour afterschool sessions, fifth-graders learn about child development and the care of and appropriate activities for various-aged infants and children, safety and first aid skills, as well as when, who and how to call for help. The kids are tested at the end and certificated in time for summer babysitting jobs. Thank you to Flambeau Hospital's Kathy Klein for organizing the sessions, and to Amy Hulbert and ??? for helping out each afternoon. (A

second volunteer is needed for each afternoon. Please call me at 762-3193 to volunteer for one or both.)

- On Wednesday, April 5th, the seven auxiliaries making up the Northwestern District of the Partners of the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) had our *Spring Tour Northwestern District meeting in Ladysmith*. I'm the District Chair, and Arlene Morrison is the District Treasurer. Winnie Lee, from the Ladysmith group, is the District Secretary. At present, there is no District Chair-Elect. New State President Mary Licht was unable to attend, as she is going through chemotherapy for breast cancer. Her written report was read to the group by state President-Elect Jan Molaska, who gave a report of her own. Copies of the impressive state volunteer statistics, collated by Mary Licht from the local presidents' reports, were in our folders. The highlights follow, and I added our FHA statistics in parentheses, for which we should all give ourselves a pat-on-the-back!

The 9,596 Partners members of the 64 local groups reporting put in 1,388,862 volunteer hours.
(FHA: 10,263 hours)

Partners members donated \$2,136,447 to their hospitals and nursing homes.
(FHA: \$31,000)

Partners groups gave 450 scholarships totaling \$450,748 to students going into a medical field.
(FHA: 8 at \$1,000 each = \$8000)

I want to give a shout-out to our Northwestern District members as well. **In 2016, Northwestern District's 995 members doing 133,054 volunteer hours did 40 fundraising projects that raised the funds to give their hospitals \$149,776 and to give 74 scholarships totaling \$37,000!**

- Rhea Lucht, our Community Health Education (CHE) Chair, is currently on vacation, so I will use state CHE Chair Sherry Jelic's report from the NW District meeting instead.

DRUGS END DREAMS 2017 CHE focus



During the next 6 hours, the approximate time of our meeting today, 18 people will have died from a drug overdose. A person dies approximately every 20 minutes.

Our CHE focus for 2017 is Drugs End Dreams. This comes in the wake of Wisconsin's recognition that the state's opioid epidemic is a public health crisis. WHA has stated its support for efforts in the state to deal with this epidemic. A task force was established by Governor Walker to address the crisis. Representative John Nygren has introduced legislative bills since 2014 in efforts to combat the state's opiate and heroin epidemic. Wisconsin's Attorney General Brad Schimel launched the campaign "Doses of Reality" in 2015 to fight against prescription drug abuse.

The US makes up 4.6% of the world's population, but consumes 80% of its opioids and 90% of the hydrocodone consumption.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services 2016 statement reported a steady increase in opioid related hospitalizations, admits to treatment facilities, and drug related deaths in Wisconsin. (Opioids include prescription drugs, such as oxycodone and codeine, and recreational drugs such as heroin.)

Sixty percent of death certificates for drug-related deaths mentioned opioids in 2006. In 2015, 74 percent mentioned opioids, according to the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services website](#), and more deaths in Wisconsin were from opioid overdoses than car crashes in 2015.

Opioid-related hospitalizations have increased in 40% of Wisconsin counties between 2012 and 2014. Increases are also reflected in admissions to publicly funded treatment. In 2014, 17.7 percent of admissions were due to opioid use, almost tripling since 2005. Addicted patients suffer from a chemical imbalance in the brain from using drugs. We tend to stigmatize people who are addicted to drugs and come to the ER for exacerbation of their symptoms, but we wouldn't look down on someone who has to be hospitalized for diabetes.

Hepatitis C is also on the rise, with the rate of infections among young people doubling from 2006 to 2015, most a result of injected drug use. Half of drug-users who inject drugs become infected with Hepatitis C within five years. Newly reported cases of Hepatitis C in 2015 were 500 cases more than the previous year.

Getting these drugs used to be easy. It is estimated that about 500,000 people reach out to multiple health care providers to get prescriptions to feed their addiction. Some of the most common prescription drugs abused include hydrocodone, oxycodone, Adderall and Xanax. Many people get addicted after being prescribed drugs for pain, ADD, or anxiety and become addicted by trying to self-medicate. Others go to a friend's house, or to their grandparents' house, to search their medicine cabinets. "If we just leave those things lying around, people are going to find it."

The *Dose of Reality* campaign started in 2015 to stop painkiller abuse before it leads to other drugs such as heroin. It features TV and radio advertisements, and increased focus on education. A major focus is on utilizing 'Drug Drop Boxes', where prescription medications can be disposed of anonymously. On the website you can access facts on the dangers of opioids, safe acquisition and storage, appropriate use, and disposal of unused medicines. Website - doseofrealitywi.gov

The HOPE Agenda (Heroin, Opioid Prevention and Education) is a legislative effort, receiving bipartisan support, aimed at combating our state's heroin epidemic. Numerous bills have been introduced by Rep. Nygren since 2014. Website - legis.wisconsin.gov

Abuse and addiction affect everyone – families, friends, communities, health care facilities.

Sherry Jelic – CHE Chair – Partners of WHA – sjelic@msn.com

- Advocates for Wisconsin's hospitals and health care systems met with Senator Janet Bewley (in black and gray, seated at the table in the middle of the picture) in her office at the State Capitol. (State Representative Beth Meyers was unable to meet with us in the afternoon because she had to drive back to Ashland for a Public Listening Session being held that evening, so she met us at Starbucks at 7:30 that morning.)



Amy Hulbert, Tom Kaster, Director of Quality and Financial Oversight at Flambeau Hospital, and I attended *Wisconsin Hospital Association's 2017 Advocacy Day on Wednesday, April 19th*. A morning of learning began with Keynote Speaker Amy Walter, National Editor, *Cook Political Report*. A Legislative Panel Q&A with State Senator Scott Fitzgerald (R), Senate Majority Leader, State Senator Jennifer Schilling (D), Senate Minority Leader, State Representative Robin Vos (R), Assembly Speaker, and State Representative Peter Barca (D), Assembly Minority Leader, was moderated by Eric Borgerding, President/CEO, Wisconsin Hospital Association. After lunch,

Governor Scott Walker addressed the group, and two advocacy awards were presented. After the 2017 Legislative Issues Update from WHA's Kyle O'Brien, Senior Vice President, Government Relations, over 600 of us headed to the Capitol.

There were three ideas to be discussed with our Legislators in the afternoon. The first was a focus on Health Care Value: Wisconsin's hospitals and health care systems ranked 11th, 7th, and 4th best in the nation by three different agencies! The second was the \$330 million surplus in this year's Medicaid program budget and our "ask" that Wisconsin pay out at least one-tenth of that amount to Disproportionate Share Hospitals, like Flambeau Hospital, that have a large percentage of patients on Medicaid. The government reimburses hospitals far below the actual costs of the services to Medicaid patients, and this use of the surplus in the budget would reimburse some of the "Hidden Health Care Tax" created by the below-cost payments hospitals receive. The third item addresses the healthcare worker shortage in Wisconsin. Because 86% of students who attend medical school and complete their residency in Wisconsin stay to practice in Wisconsin, our "ask" was for an additional \$1.5 million investment in the residency program expansion started in 2013. In addition, we advocated for the Rural Initiative's Focus on Health Care's four companion bills, which would help people get the schooling/training they need to become non-MD health care workers.

Let's all speak up for Flambeau Hospital! One day of advocacy is not enough! All of us who care about Flambeau Hospital – and need it to be there for us! – can advocate by contacting our state legislators via letter, phone, email, or face-to-face. The WHA's Hospital Education and Advocacy Team (HEAT) program gives you the information you need about current issues and makes advocating easy. Go to www.wha.org to find out more, or call me at 715-762-3193, and I'll get their brochure to you.

NOTE: The report given by State Public Policy Education Chair Barb Filla at the Northwestern District meeting will be included in the August FHA newsletter.

- ***News from the Thrift Shop!*** Thanks go out to Thrift Shop Chair Arlene Morrison and the many, many volunteers who completed the Changeover from winter to spring and summer clothes on March 28th through 31st. The Thrift Shop reopened for business on April Fools' Day, but we aren't fooling at all when we say we have the lowest prices in town! We hope you'll come in frequently, because new items are put out every day that we're open.

Note: When the sidewalks get torn up, the Thrift Shop will be closed until they are replaced, because there are no other doors that can be used for customer access! Until then, the Thrift Shop will be open for business and accepting donations!

Every Thrift Shop volunteer, whether a regular who comes in every week or someone who comes in when called to sub for a regular, deserves a ton of thanks! If **you** are not already a Thrift Shop volunteer, please consider giving a few hours of your time to help the Thrift Shop continue to thrive. Call Arlene Morrison at 762-4236 or the Thrift Shop at 762-4800, or just stop in and leave your name and number. We train new volunteers – and no one ever works alone!

- *A huge thank you also goes out to all our dedicated Rag Cutters,* who continue to work every Tuesday morning preparing cleaning rags to be sold to Flambeau River Papers and other area businesses, as well as at the Thrift Shop. The gross sales for 2016 for the Thrift Shop and Rag Sales combined were \$52,700.69! When you consider that most of the items sell for \$1.00 or less, that's a lot of items and a lot of hours sorting, marking, displaying, selling, and bagging – or cutting and boxing!

This June, the FHA will be nominating our Rag Cutters for the Wisconsin Award for Volunteer Excellence (WAVE), in the fundraising category. Winners in all four categories will receive the award at the Partners of WHA Convention in October. No matter the outcome, these ladies are winners in our book!

- ***The next Auxiliary meeting is on Monday, May 8th in the Board Room of the Murphy Building starting at 1:30.*** I encourage every member to come, and to participate! Monthly meetings are not held in the summer. You will receive the next newsletter in August, reminding you that meetings will begin again on Monday, September 11th with a potluck lunch at noon.

I hope to see you at the meeting on Monday, May 8th and at the Salad Luncheon on Wednesday, May 17th. Have a wonderful summer!

Ginny Bosse

