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Northwestern District

Spring 2020 Newsletter

Messages from the Northwestern District Chair

Ginny Bosse - Flambeau Hospital Auxiliary, Park Falls

Last year, I began the winter newsletter finding the Silver Lining in a late-season windy snow storm. If there is any Silver Lining in this year's COVID-19 pandemic, it is the concern and caring that most people are showing for each other. I'm not really fond of the term "social distancing" which actually means physical distancing. More than ever, people need to use their phones, computers, and other electronic devices to stay close socially and to give each other emotional support. Though the U.S. is not as far up the Coronavirus Curve as some other nations because it arrived here later, we must do everything we can to flatten the curve, especially through this social/physical distancing.

A Message from the Northwestern District PPE Chair

Ginny Bosse - Flambeau Hospital Auxiliary, Park Falls

Public Policy is mainly determined by the people who we vote into office. Some of them listen very closely to the people they represent, and others not so much. The elections taking place in Wisconsin on April 7th include local government and School Board races. As a citizen of my community, I care about local government, and voting in local elections is a way to influence public policy in my community. As a parent, grandparent, and retired public school educator, I continue to care deeply about public education, educators, and the children in our public schools. One may think the Presidential vote is the most important, but since it is only a Preference Vote, it really isn't. In my mind the most important race is the one that will influence Wisconsinites for the next 10 years: the Wisconsin Supreme Court race. As a citizen of Wisconsin, I care deeply about all citizens of Wisconsin, and in my mind, there is only one person who will put the law above personal beliefs or the wishes of the people who donated to the campaign. Please research the candidates and **vote!**

In Wisconsin, you can vote by absentee ballot simply because you want to. In fact, this year Wisconsin is encouraging it because of COVID-19. You can request it at www.myvote.wi.gov or call (608)266-8005 or (866)VOTEWIS, AKA (866)868-3947 to request yours by April 2nd (unless it gets extended). When you receive yours, it will have a postage prepaid envelope for returning it.

With cases of COVID-19 now in every state, much of public policy in the news revolves around what the national, state, and local governments are or aren't doing about it. Volunteers are on "leaves of absence" by decisions meant to protect the hospital, hospital staff, patients and the volunteers themselves. While staying at home to protect ourselves and others, we should keep ourselves informed through many means. Remember that some media sources are biased in one direction or another and also either more- or less- factual in their reporting. Social media is exactly that: social. Some people and groups on social media can be trusted to be truthful, while others are filled with misinformation, sometimes purposefully to misinform the public, cause distrust of others, and perhaps even recruit them to a cause under these false pretences. Some causes, like the Partners of WHA and our local hospitals and communities, are great causes, and we must continue to be advocates for them. See below for two great sources of information. And, if you are not already a member of for the Hospital Education and Advocacy Team (HEAT), please do so with the WHA advocacy link below!

The following are sources of Public Policy information:

www.wha.org/advocacy brings you to a page with links to information on state and federal issues; a printable Legislative Directory of Wisconsin's Constitutional Officers, state legislators and legislative committees, and the Wisconsin Federal Delegation; a link to the WHA Political Action Committee (PAC) and Conduit; and a link to sign up for the Hospital Education and Advocacy Team (HEAT) Action Alerts

www.thewheelerreport.com is a legislative news service covering the Wisconsin State Legislature. It tracks all legislation introduced including bill referrals, hearing notices, executive session action, floor action, and action by the Governor.

To stay informed about the novel Coronavirus, the U.S. Center of Disease control is the best source. Go to www.cdc.gov/coronavirus. In addition, *The President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America – 15 Days to Slow the Spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19)* plan can be found at www.whitehouse.gov.

A Message from the Northwestern District CHE Chair

Beth Burnham - Partners of Spooner Health, Spooner

Hi everyone.

At this time our health topic and our current health crisis are meshing. We are all inundated with the daily updates on the Covid-19 outbreak in the country. As we navigate through this situation it is important to keep a common sense perspective. However those people who suffer from an anxiety disorder have difficulty with managing their fears, and this type of a health emergency can make their condition worse. It isn't enough to tell them to calm down, they need reassurance and someone to reach out and stay connected with them. If you know someone with this disorder, emphasize to them the basic actions to take to stay safe and healthy. We are all hearing them almost daily. Wash your hands, avoid large crowds if possible, and stay home if not feeling well, to name a few. As volunteers we may have to make some choices about our activities in our communities. Stay as connected as you are able and just one more thing – Stay well and WASH YOUR HANDS!!!

“Promise me you’ll always remember: you are braver than you believe, and stronger than you , and smarter than you think.” – Christopher Robin to Pooh Bear

Submitted March 11th, 2020 by Beth Burnham, NW District Community Health Education Chair

Northwestern District Chair Report for the 2020-3-19 Partners Board Meeting

2019 was the Northwestern District’s first year with only six local MEMBERS: Partners of Memorial Medical Center in Ashland, Hayward Hospital Auxiliary, Partners of Marshfield Medical Center-Ladysmith, Flambeau Hospital Auxiliary in Park Falls, Volunteer Partners of Spooner Health, and Essentia Health St. Marys Hospital-Superior Auxiliary. **Together their 681 members worked 43,814 Volunteer Hours worth \$1,114,190.02, a per member value of \$1636.11. With funds earned through 46 fundraising projects, \$133,725.16 was donated to their hospitals and \$38,000 given as scholarships to 42 students going into or furthering their careers in a medical field. Fifty-two health education programs and 23 newsletter articles educated members. Twenty-eight public policy projects or programs, plus twenty newsletter articles, informed their membership, who made 188 contacts with legislators.**

Twenty members attended the Northwestern District’s 2019 Fall District Meeting, hosted by the Flambeau Hospital Auxiliary and held on Tuesday, October 25th at the Northwoods Supper Club in Fifiield. Only five of the district’s MEMBERS were represented because the President, and driver, of the Superior group had strep throat. At this time, the only leadership vacancies in the MEMBERS are: a President-Elect in Spooner and a PPE Chair in Superior.

The Northwestern District is not doing quite that well, unfortunately. Four years ago at our Spring Tour District meeting, a Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer were elected and installed. Four months later, the Chair-Elect moved out of the district, and we’ve been without one ever since. Two years ago, we had only one candidate - for the office of Treasurer. Luckily, Linda Fish agreed to take a Secretary/Treasurer office, and I went, very unenthusiastically, into a second term, so our Northwestern District has not been in compliance with the Partners of WHA Bylaws for two years already. Linda Fish is willing to serve another term as Secretary/Treasurer, so after April 15th, so we will have only one officer. What then? Who knows? A question that was asked at a meeting of one of our MEMBERS that I attended this winter was whether or not the district would cease to exist without a district chair. I don’t know the answer to that question. With spring district meetings being postponed indefinitely, our time to find leaders is extended, one of the few very teensy bits of Silver Lining in the COVID-19 Cloud we are currently under.

2020-3-19 Partners Board Meeting

The spring board and committee meetings of the Partners of WHA were scheduled to be at the WHA office on the Thursday and Friday following Advocacy Day. When Advocacy Day was canceled, they were moved to the hotel in Madison that is used by Partners because of its proximity to the WHA office, and we already had reservations there. Those reservations were canceled shortly before the expiration of charge-free cancelation, and all meetings took place via Conference Call. Beginning the meeting at 10:00, the Board was able to finish its business about 1:40, and those

needing to stay on for the District Chair continued until about 2:10. (We all had a break from 11:30 to noon.)

The tickets for the raffle at Convention are usually distributed on Spring Tour. They have been printed, but it is illegal to USPS mail them. It would cost \$700-\$800 to send them to individual Partners MEMBERS via other delivery services, so until there is some certainty that the Convention will actually be held, they will not be distributed. If Convention can be held as planned, it is possible that Partners groups could “take paid orders” for them, and those attending would turn in the money and fill in the purchaser’s information on the ticket. Though none of us can see into the future, we are still trying to plan for it!

The reports of the President, President-Elect, CHE, PPE, seven District Chairs, Reaching Out Editor, and the Strategic Planning, Nominating, and Convention Committees will be posted on the Partners of WHA website soon.

2020 Spring Tour Northwestern District Meetings

Because all Spring Tour District meetings were cancelled, Partners and each district will need to make some decisions about how to proceed. Because we don’t know what our options will be, we can’t make those decisions now, but we need to start thinking about them. Under the assumption that there would be a NW District meeting on April 15th, I have been saying for many months that I will be done on that date, no matter whether there is a new District Chair or not. However, under the circumstances of the cancelation of all the district meetings and the uncertainty of how and when we may be able to schedule meetings again, I will continue to be the contact person between our NW District and Partners leadership.

Note: The afternoon of March 24th, the District Chairs received an email from Jan Molaska saying that Partners leadership is looking at having a FALL TOUR rather than spring. She asks that the Fall District Meeting be scheduled in September so that they are before Convention. North Central has scheduled theirs for Tuesday, September 22nd. She did not say this, but I assume from what she did say, that it would make things easier for the state delegation if we scheduled ours that week, too, either the day before or after.

Things the Northwestern District Need to Think About:

1.) Officers: We have been in violation of the Partners Bylaws for years when it comes to District officers. There are ways we can get into compliance! Linda Fish is willing to continue for another term as Secretary/Treasurer. If two people would agree to be District Co-Chairs, they would be able to share duties and support each other, plus, with three officers, the district would be in compliance! Please consider this option! Again, I am willing to support the Co-Chairs, if that is the way we go.

2.) District Meetings: No matter when group gatherings are allowed again, we should be planning various options regarding upcoming district meetings. The rotation of district meetings for the remaining two years are: Spring 2020 – Ashland, Fall 2020 – Superior, Spring 2021 – Spooner, Fall 2021 – Ladysmith (Hold next lottery at this meeting!) If there ends up being only one or no district meetings in 2020, do the 2020 scheduled hosts get a pass? Or do we restart the rotation where we left off? Or do we assign them to 2022? Or. . .? Yes, we will have to play it by ear somewhat, but we

want to be ready to go when we finally get the go-ahead from the government, Partners, and our individual hospitals.

3.) Northwestern District Bylaws: Our Bylaws are the rules under which we run our organization. I confess that I have not done what I promised to do about our NW District Bylaws, but I will send a copy of them in the same email that I send this newsletter. If you don't receive it, please email immediately to remind me! After the April 7th election, I will have time to look at them and suggest amendments.

Mary Licht Scholarships

Nearly 2 ½ years ago, the Mary Licht Scholarship program was created shortly after Mary's death. The scholarships pay recipients' Partners Convention first-time registrations. Our own Denise Williams was one of the two winners for 2019. During our Partners Board conference call on Thursday, March 18th, the only correspondence, which was read aloud to the Board, was Denise's Thank You note/letter.

Though many things are "up-in-the-air" regarding the Partners Convention, it can't hurt to send in applications for this year's scholarships, if your group has members who have never attended a Partners Convention and would like to. The scholarship application can be found on the Partners website.

Our NW District Leadership:



Usually the last pages of the district newsletter contained rosters of our district and local leaders. During the Board conference call, one of the things discussed was the Partners Leadership Handbook. The majority were of the opinion that they are becoming obsolete, with so much being available on the Partners website. So, even though I recently sent all Presidents copies of our revised roster, I am including the link to ours:

www.partnersofwha.org/members

Thanks for all you do for your members, your hospitals and nursing homes, and your communities! And special thanks for reading this long newsletter and for sharing this newsletter with your members! Take care of yourselves, your families and friends and hopefully we'll see each other soon!

Ginny Bosse, Northwestern District Chair