



Members of Partners With OLVH!

Happy Winter! It's the New Year 2021, and hopefully things will be better! In the meantime, we need to keep our spirits up and do our best to keep Partners With OLVH alive!

A great big thank you to Pat Dahl for making several lap quilts to give to the residents at Country Terrace. Pat loves making them and works with Our Savior's who provided the place and some of the materials. I made some labels for each quilt so the facility and residents knew that Partners With OLVH and Our Savior's Lutheran Church donated them. I'm sure we made their Christmas a little more special.

In December a couple of us sent cards to every hospital department, police, fire, and EMT departments in the hospital area, thanking them for being a COVID hero!

Roxie, Pat, and I have been trying to come up with other volunteer things we can do for other facilities. We will be making St. Patrick's Day cards for each Sunset Home apartment, and if you are interested in working with a small group of no larger than 10, please call me at 715-644-3638 or email me at donnorchrist@charter.net. We will be meeting at a local church, will wear masks, social distance, and sanitizer will be available.

Not comfortable going out and being in a small group yet? Here are some other suggestions. 1) Call someone you know and talk with them. 2) Make or buy a card, or just write a short note on a sheet of paper and mail it to someone you know. Sign your name and include "Partners With Our Lady of Victory Hospital" under it. If you need more names, try using your church directory, phone book, or your personal address book for ideas, or call me or send me an email and I will give you some names. 3) Consider sending a donation to help with any expenses entailed with these monthly projects. Make your check for whatever amount you are comfortable with, and note in the memo "COVID" so we know this money can be used for these projects. Send the check to our treasurer, Roxanne Novotny, PO Box 83, Stanley, WI. This will save her checking the mail slot at the hospital. These are very simple and easy ways to give cheer at this tough time. Please keep track of your time for our year-end report, just call or email me.

Once again, everyone will be exempt from dues for 2021, but will still be a member! We would like to keep Partners With OLVH going and know that as a volunteer, it's very hard to feel "useful" when we are unable to do the things we were used to doing as Partners. But, again, let's think "outside the box" and come up with ideas.

We are considering having a Thrift Sale sometime this summer if we receive the okay from the hospital. We already have a chair for this thrift sale and a member who is willing to have it in their garage , so all we need is donations and anyone able to help the day(s) of the sale. So...start going through things to see what you might be able to donate for this sale. We are asking for nice things that are in good shape. Suggestions are knick knacks, small appliances, baby clothes, boots, coats, or any nice items you may have that you would like to donate. If you have a large item you want to donate or have any questions, please call me at 715-644-3638 or email me at donnorchirst@charter.net. We may be asking members to take back anything that doesn't sell, depending on what and how much is left.

I am waiting to hear of any suggestions that the departments need or can use that is not included in their budget. The idea is to have a specific item that the thrift sale money will go towards. We have some money in or checking account that we are able to use at this time to donate to the hospital and are thinking of donating up to \$3,000 for a piece of medical equipment for a department, which would be included in the advertising for the thrift sale. I will be emailing all members, and calling those who do not have email, to ask for your vote on this.

I received our "Honor Points" award certificate for 2019 in the mail today! WE DID IT AGAIN! Because of the pandemic, there won't be any Honor Points given out for 2020, so let's hope for a better year in 2021 so we can once again have in person meetings!

Stay safe and healthy!

Donella Christianson – Co-President

Below are articles taken from the Partners of WHA's "Reaching Out" November 2020

A Message from the President-Elect

Amazing Volunteers Partners of WHA is an amazing group of individuals who are dedicated to the health of their communities. They range from high school students just beginning their journey to retirees looking at the sunset of life; from health care professionals to teachers to corporate executives. As volunteers, they offer their varied skills for a variety of reasons. All of them are frustrated in this time.

Volunteers are committed to actively doing things to help. They are not accustomed to helping by staying home, doing nothing. Over the course of the last several months their creativity has shone in finding ways to reach out and support the organizations that they serve while protecting themselves and the health of their community. They have learned new skills including electronic platforms like Microsoft Teams and Zoom to stay connected.

The main reason that our participants like being involved in Partners at the district and state level is the opportunity to meet and work with others from around the state. This year has made that much more complicated, but we have developed new strategies using new technologies to keep in touch. I look forward to participating in some fall district meetings via my trusty laptop because I so missed seeing everyone on Spring Tour. As we plan for our spring meetings, we are arranging for physical sites and electronic resources, just in case.

I am honored to be your President for 2021 and 2022 and look forward to working with all of you. I hope that I can measure up to the task.

I am pleased to announce that Sherry Jelic of Columbus, our current Community Health Education Chair, has accepted the position of Strategic Planning Chair. She brings a wealth of experience with Partners and great leadership skills to this position and will build on the great work that Jaci Fuller has done.

I am also very grateful to welcome Sue Schuelke of Menomonee Falls to the position of Community Health Education Chair. Sue has chosen a focus on infectious disease. Besides updated and accurate information on the Coronavirus, other communicable and infectious diseases will be covered, including areas such as vaccines and the science behind them, prevention as well as the latest treatments, socioeconomic and mental health impacts, just to name a few. Look for more information to be published on the Partners website in December!

Bill McCullough of Eau Claire will continue to lead our advocacy efforts as our Public Policy Education Chair. Advocacy for the health of our communities includes advocating with our public policymakers and with our friends and families. I know that Bill will keep us informed. He is also leading our effort to develop our leadership training resources.

Because of the complications of the pandemic, the Partners Board decided in the spring to defer the Best of Best and WAVE Awards to 2021. The applications that have been received will be reviewed with those received for next year. We are grateful to Jeanne Tatro, WAVE chair, and Bev Lazar, Best of the Best chair, and their committees for agreeing to serve in 2021. We look forward to applications that show adaptation of projects to the pandemic conditions. The Board has also added a category to the WAVE Award for advocacy.

Jan Molaska has had the most unusual presidency in the history of Partners. She has been our president since the passing of Mary Licht in 2017. She has led us through some very complicated times as we navigated the logistics of losing a leader midstream and as we put in place the bylaws that Mary helped us develop. She has done it all with style, grace, patience, and compassion. We are so grateful for her leadership and are glad that we have two more years to continue to learn from her. We hope that soon Jan will be able to spend lots of time with her grandchildren and volunteering at Aspirus in Wausau. Next October, we hope to give her the send-off that she deserves, IN PERSON! Thank you very much for your service, Jan.

As we move into the new year, please let me know if you have any concerns, suggestions, or questions. Together we will build the future.

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Public Policy Education Report

One important goal was set by the 2019 Partners Strategic Planning Committee: “Enhance leadership development and identification at the local level. Develop a ‘tool kit’ to assist local Partners organizations with identification and development of local leaders.”

In early 2019, the assigned co-chairs, Jaci Fuller & Bill McCullough, met with Partners President Jan Molaska to discuss the importance of this goal and how available resources could be identified to support goal achievement. Because of the breadth of this subject, the committee was expanded to include Cindy Hermel, Ron Zahrt, and President-Elect Peg Larson. It is clear that resources and writings on the subject are unlimited.

In True North: Discover Your Authentic Leadership, written by former Medtronic CEO Bill George and Ann Fudge, former CEO of Young & Rubicam, it stated: “All of us have the spark of leadership in us, whether in business or government or as a nonprofit volunteer. The challenge is to understand our selves well enough to discover where we can use our leadership gifts to serve others. If not me, then who? If not now, then when?”

Some initial questions for the committee’s consideration were: 1. How do we identify members interested in pursuing a position of leadership? 2. How could our Mentorship Plan be implemented to build success? 3. How and when would the “tool kit” be introduced to leadership for review and agreement? 4. What resource information would be recommended and made available to both mentor and mentee? 5. How might the Partners website be utilized to provide enhanced resources? 6. How might available resources from WHA be utilized? 7. Could resources be identified within the Wisconsin library consortium?

With leadership assistance from our WHA Liaison Leigh Ann Larson, committee telephone conference calls were conducted and resulted in the following considerations: 1. Importance of including information about the Partners organization in new volunteer orientation 2. Importance of and commitment to the Mentor Program established by Partners 3. Consideration to provide a “standard orientation” for new members in each district 4. Importance of introduction of “tool kit” at district meetings 5. Acknowledge that there is no “one size fits all” approach.

While the advent of the current COVID-19 pandemic has impacted this committee and other initiatives, progress continues to be made. The Leadership Handbook, posted on the Partners website is being revised to include specific reference to the topic of leadership and the Mentor Program. When this task is completed, Section 16.2 of the Handbook will list various readings and references.

It is our plan, when once again able to conduct district meetings in person, to seek your input and to offer guidelines for implementation of this leadership initiative. We all agree that leadership is the key ingredient to the continued success of the Partners organization.

Please stay tuned and feel free to contact this committee with your questions.

Bill McCullough, PPE Chair 715-832-7053; Email: webirish@gmail.com

Community Health Education Report

Our Journey for Mental Health

During the past two years our Community Health Education focus has been MENTAL HEALTH. Many organizations strive to create awareness and importance of mental health, but there is still a lack of knowledge and understanding on the subject. Why is learning about mental health important? Because not all wounds are visible.

Mental health is important in every stage of life. Mental health and physical health are connected. Mental illnesses are prevalent in our world and often lead to other conditions. It is estimated that 1 in 5 Americans experience a mental health condition each year. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 20% of the world’s youth have mental health disorders and about half of them develop disorders before the age of 14.

Anyone can have a mental illness. Regardless of a person’s age, race, religion, or income, mental illness can be present. It can disrupt a person’s thinking, mood, feelings, and daily functioning. People can suffer from mental illness without the illness being visible to themselves or others. Mental health issues need not be severe; some are mild and easily treated. But these may grow into something worse if left untreated. Awareness and knowledge about symptoms and treatments can help us recognize and seek necessary treatment for ourselves or others.

The stigma and discrimination of mental illness has been a stumbling block in recognition and treatment. The belief that a person is making excuses or feigning mental illness for attention, that they can “snap out of it” if they choose, or that mental illness is untreatable, still indicates a misunderstanding of the complexity of mental health. Even if a person struggles with a mental health problem, they still may not seek the help they need, feeling that doing so is a sign of weakness. Mental illness in children has been seen in the past as invalid. Testing for anxiety and other mental health issues in children as young as five has reversed this way of thinking. Getting help is important. This is why education is so important. Mental health knowledge is vital in today’s society. With the proper care and treatment, symptoms of mental illnesses can be greatly reduced. With treatment, people can experience a reduction in symptoms and an improved quality of life.

Mental illness causes people to miss work. Mental health conditions are the second-leading cause for employees having to miss work. Nearly 23% of all years lost due to disability are a result of mental health and substance use disorders (WHO).

Mental health disorders and addiction contribute to increased suicides. Worldwide, 800,000 people commit suicide each year and it is the second leading cause of death in 15-29-year-olds (WHO). The key to reducing these numbers is awareness of the signs, and effectively managing the symptoms.

Even if you don't have a mental health diagnosis, practicing good mental health is still very important. When you age, you want to have better mental health and be able to stay sharp. By keeping your mental health up, you can grow as a person and be able to resist depressing days or other challenges that come your way.

The Health Education focus is a decision made between the Partners President and the chair of Community Health Education, and is based on current health emphases of both WHA and AHA. It is considered for the value of education of the subject and for opportunities for advocacy related to the health issue.

I hope that this journey for mental health has presented an understanding of the hurdles of stigma, correct diagnoses, availability of resources, and health coverage limits as it relates to mental health, as well as habits that help us stay mentally healthy. If you agree, then let us stand together in awareness and advocacy for the best understanding, care, and services for mental health!!

Thank You! I want to thank Jan Molaska for allowing me to do what I love best – educating about health issues that affect ourselves, our hospitals, and our communities, so that we can each enjoy the best health that is possible, and therefore live a quality life. I also want to thank the Partners officers, board members, and volunteers for supporting our health topics and focus, and passing the information along to others in their hospitals and communities. Nothing is as powerful as knowledge and nothing is as strong as a volunteer heart.

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"COVID 19 Warning" Do not let them take your temperature going into the grocery store! It's a scam! They're erasing your memory! I went in for bread and eggs and came home with beer, pizza, and ice cream! Now I know you are smiling! Stay safe!

Best Foods for Arthritis 1. Fish – mackerel, salmon, tuna, herring 2. Beans – red, kidney, pinto 3. Oils – extra virgin oils, safflower 4. Fruits – watermelon, red raspberries, avocado, cherries, strawberries 5. Vegetables – Brussels sprouts, broccoli, spinach, broccoli, dark green leafy lettuce 6. Dairy Products – low fat milk, yogurt, cheese 7. Citrus – oranges, grapefruit, limes 8. Seasonings – garlic, onions, leeks 9. Nuts – peanuts, pistachio, pine nuts, almonds, walnuts 10. Grains – oatmeal, brown rice, whole grain cereals

What to drink: 1. Green tea 2. Coffee 3. Milk 4. Juices 5. Smoothies 6. Water

