

*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

### Returning to Action



Peg Larson

Spring Tour will be in progress when you are reading this! We are so excited to be able to meet with all of you, even if it is virtually. Partners is moving forward to continue to provide education and networking opportunities for volunteers all over the state and beyond. I want to be sure that everyone who would like to participate is able to. We have a couple of practice sessions scheduled, but if anyone needs help, please email, text, or call me! I will do my very best to help

you troubleshoot your issue. We are so glad that so many of the Partners are adventuring into the virtual world with us. One of the benefits of our virtual Spring Tour is the cost savings of no travel. Partners is waiving the dues for 2021 to allow the local organizations to save their hard-earned money.

Thank you for submitting your annual reports! Most of our members (48 of 54) were able to complete their report for 2020. We were amazed at the good that groups were able to do. The greatest impact of the pandemic was in hours of service. In 2019, 7,929 members provided 655,823 hours of service and donated \$924,519 to projects. In 2020, 6,275 members provided only 202,317 hours of service but were able to donate \$857,381! The number of scholarships declined from 302 to 250, \$311,125 to \$270,728, still impressive numbers in a difficult year. Fortunately, many organizations have managed to endow their scholarships, allowing them to continue supporting students in their community and taking advantage of a good year in the stock market. Health Education suffered with only 87 projects (241 in 2019) and 85 articles (167 in 2019). Public Policy activity also was difficult; although, it is hard to know if part of the drop is related to data collection, difficult in a "normal" year. Nonetheless, there were 42 articles (146) and 571 (1,090) contacts with legislators. With Advocacy Day cancelled in 2020, our members did not get to visit their legislators in Madison as usual.

We know that some of you are back doing your regular volunteer work, some of you are back doing different jobs, and some of you are not expecting to be back any time soon. This time is hard on all of us. We need your stories! I know that you all have done great things for your communities during the pandemic, moving out of your usual activities and still doing amazing things to support the hospital staff, patients, and families. Pick

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## A Message from the President-Elect

### Partners to Move Forward



Sharon Scott

I am filled with a growing sense of excitement, positiveness, and anticipation as Partners of WHA moves forward with the 2021 schedule.

Allow me to explain—**excitement** for volunteers beginning to return to their respective health care venues and "seeing" many of you as Spring Tour resumes via Microsoft Teams platform; **positiveness** that resonates from the dedication and leadership skills of the Partners Board of Directors and executive officers as they continue to explore ways to move the Partners of WHA forward; and finally, a great **anticipation** that the in-person annual convention will be well attended and a great success. With all these positive energies aligning, I predict a very fruitful and successful year for Partners.

I am pleased to announce several new Honor Point opportunities have been approved by the Partners of WHA Board of Directors during their February spring meeting. The rationale for the additions was thoughtful consideration for a smaller organization's ability to achieve Honor Point status. All additions will be defined during Spring Tour meetings. 40 points remains the minimum and the new form will be

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### ***A Message from the President...continued from page 1***

your best one and apply for the WAVE Award! The two-year period is being waived this year, so you are able to give us your best ideas and activities.

We would love to share the rest of your great activities on our Facebook page and our website, so send pictures and stories that we can use to inspire all of us. I would particularly like to get a mask count! I know that most of our member organizations have sewists who have been providing masks for their community. Please send me the count for your group.

Jeanne Tatro is preparing with her committee to review your WAVE applications. We are excited to add a Public Policy category and suspend the two-year requirement this year. Bev Lazar is ready for your Best of the Best nominations for the administrators who have led through the storm this year. We are in the midst of planning for Convention this fall. We are hoping that with the great vaccination rates we will be able to meet in person in Madison. Terri Donlin and her committee are doing a great job preparing, and we look forward to welcoming you all.

Thank you for all that you do to support the health of your community! We look forward to seeing you online this spring and in person in the fall!

*Peg Larson*  
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### ***A Message from the President-Elect... continued from page 1***

available on the Partners website, [partnersofwha.org](http://partnersofwha.org). **AS A REMINDER, HONOR POINTS WERE SUSPENDED FOR 2020.** The new criteria will be in place for 2021.

Additionally, as local organizations may be considering a transition from the traditional officer structured organizations to other structure formats, an interesting question has come forth: "How can leaders 'move' into district- and state-level positions without the experience of serving in a leadership role at the local level, per stated language of individual district bylaws?" It is important for each district to thoughtfully review the language of their bylaws and perhaps revise the language to support those new structures and maintain the leadership opportunities. A gentle reminder: experience in leadership positions may come from a member's other volunteering affiliation and should be considered, i.e., Girl/Boy Scouts, church councils, etc.

Let us be hopeful in 2021. Let us remain positive. Let us remember how eagerly and passionately we want to return to volunteering and in-person gatherings with family and friends. Let us remember together, we can move Partners of WHA forward and let us remember respect for all is respect for the WHOLE.

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## **Back to Normal?**

Happy Spring! With nature's re-birth on the horizon, we are also looking at a new day in terms of starting to be able to gather and be with friends and family—something we have not been able to do in a long time. Many of you have already become vaccinated and may have started volunteering at your respective hospitals. A sure sign that things are getting back to normal.

Having said this, we are still being asked to be cautious, as the new COVID-19 strains are adding a level of caution. Masking, social distancing, and hand washing are all still being advised.

As I wrote about in the February newsletter, with us all still needing to be more cautious, Advocacy Day was held virtually April 14. For those of you who attended and/or participated in a legislative visit, thank you! We appreciate and value your attendance and involvement.

The application materials for the Partners of WHA annual awards (BOB and WAVE) are up on the [Partners website](http://Partners website). Check them out today! **The deadline to submit applications is June 4, 2021.**

Take care and be safe.

*Leigh Ann S. Larson*  
WHA Vice President of Education and Marketing, Executive Director of the WHA Foundation, and Partners of WHA Liaison  
Email: [llarson@wha.org](mailto:llarson@wha.org)



*Leigh Ann Larson*

## Prepare for State Convention: “Together We Build a Better Future”

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, October 5 - Thursday, October 7, 2021, at the Madison Marriott West Convention Center for the annual Partners Convention. As convention chair, I am genuinely excited at how well the planning is progressing. Volunteers from the Southern District are working diligently to ensure an educational, spirited, and enjoyable three days of speakers, workshops, delicious food, and the opportunity to network with fellow volunteers throughout our great state of Wisconsin. We even have a few surprises in store for those who attend!

As for workshop news, we are bringing back some previous favorites in fundraising and health/wellness as well as adding some spice with new options like Yoga (Chair / Laughter), Mindful Eating, Souper Bags, Finances and Fundraising roundtable, and a safety session with local police officers and mental health awareness.

Our keynote speaker is a familiar face to some of you and I know you will be excited to see her and hear her engaging, enthusiastic speech on her view of our theme “Together We Build a Better Future.” **Lisa Hare** is excited to be our keynote speaker as well as present our workshop on Mindful Eating. Our closing speaker is scheduled to have her first book published this summer; we are hopeful that she will have copies to autograph for purchase after the closing. **Darcy Luoma** has been part of the Madison community for many years, and is a master coach and speaker. The title of her closing speech will be “Thoughtfully Fit®: Build for the Future with Core Confidence.” I hope everyone will stay and hear this amazing speaker—you will be “wowed”!

Due to the virtual Spring Tour, look for raffle tickets to be delivered to some of the hospital’s volunteer leaders by the convention committee members and myself—a tour of Wisconsin this summer sounds like a beautiful respite from sitting in the house all winter. There are some wonderful prizes and more coming in!!!! Please remember to bring your tickets (both sold and unsold) to convention. Do not send tickets through the U.S. postal service since it is unlawful.

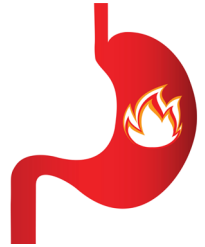
“Oh, what do I wear throughout convention?” is a common question. In answer, business casual is always acceptable; HOWEVER, *building* being part of the theme, feel free to wear your flannel shirts and builder overhauls or whatever makes YOU feel like you can be part of building a better future. Registration information and convention booklet will be coming mid-summer. So looking forward to sharing convention with you, greeting familiar faces, and welcoming new faces.

Have a most enjoyable summer and see you in October!!!!

Terri Donlin, 2021 Convention Chair  
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## Heartburn Relief

Heartburn occurs when stomach acid backs up into your esophagus. The following lifestyle changes may eliminate or reduce the frequency of your symptoms as listed below.



- **Avoid your triggers** – Most people have specific foods and beverages that trigger heartburn. Common offenders are fried or fatty foods, chocolate, mint, alcohol, coffee, carbonated beverages, onions, tomato-based, and citrus foods and juices.
- **Lose excess weight** – Excess pounds put pressure on your abdomen, which crowds your stomach and can cause acid backup.
- **Avoid tightness at your waist** – Reduce pressure on your abdomen by loosening your belt or by not wearing control-top stockings or body-shaping undergarments.
- **Eat smaller meals** – Doing so reduces pressure from the stomach on the lower esophageal sphincter and makes it less likely stomach acid will escape into your esophagus.
- **Don't lie down after a meal** – Wait 2 to 3 hours after a meal before you lie down. If you nap, try doing so in a more upright reclining chair.
- **Don't use tobacco** – Tobacco interferes with function of the lower esophageal sphincter.
- **Raise the head of your bed** – If you're bothered by heartburn in the night, elevate the head of your bed 6 to 8 inches using blocks under the legs.

An appointment with your doctor is warranted if these lifestyle changes don't relieve your symptoms or if you have heartburn more than twice a week.

Daniel Roberts, MD  
Mayo Clinic Health

## Summary of Annual Reports

	2019	2020
Member Organizations	56	55
Organizations Reporting	54	48
Total Individuals in Member Organizations	7,929	6,275
Hours of Service	655,823	202,317
Total Dollars Donated to Hospital or Others	\$924,519	\$857,381
Scholarships Given - Number	302	250
Scholarships Given - Dollars	\$311,125	\$270,728
Number of Health Education Project/Programs	241	87
Number of Health Education Articles	167	85
Number of Contacts with Legislators	1,090	571
Number of Public Policy Articles	146	42

## WAVE Reminder for 2021

The Partners of WHA, Inc. invite you to submit an application for the annual Wisconsin Awards for Volunteer Excellence (WAVE). This award was established by Partners of WHA, Inc. to recognize outstanding contributions of organized volunteer programs. The application is patterned after the national AHA HAVE awards program (American Hospital Association's Hospital Awards for Volunteer Excellence).

Five awards may be given out each year, one in each of the following categories:

1. **Community Service**
2. **Fundraising**
3. **In-service**
4. **Community Outreach and/or Collaboration**
5. **Public Policy and Advocacy**

Please read through the 2021 award application from the Partners of WHA website, [www.partnersofwha.org](http://www.partnersofwha.org). Due to the suspension of the WAVE program last year, you may submit programs from 2019 or 2020. You may submit a new program or an annual one. You may also submit a program you have previously submitted, as long as it has not received the WAVE award in the past. Please follow the rules and procedures as outlined on the application form to avoid disqualification.

Your original application and four complete copies must be submitted to the WHA office and **postmarked on or before June 4, 2021**.

The winners will be contacted no later than the end of August. The awards will be presented at the Partners of WHA annual convention, October 5, 2021 at the Madison Marriott West. Remember that a submitted application counts for Honor Points.

Some of you may have been on the April 21 meeting as was planned. This allowed individuals to ask questions about the applications and the changes that were made at the board meeting. Please note that the WAVE Award has added a public policy category and has suspended for this year the requirement that programs be in place for two years.

Best wishes to each of you, and please do not hesitate to contact me.

*Jeanne Tatro, Chair*

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# Community Health Education Report

## COVID-19 and Stress



Sue Schuelke

With the COVID-19 battle still being fought and May being “Mental Health Awareness Month,” it seemed fitting to talk about COVID-related stress.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a lot of stress in our personal lives, families, and communities. Many families have not been able to gather and hug one another, leading to feelings of isolation and loneliness. Unemployment numbers rose and the closing of non-essential businesses have caused financial worries. These are just a few examples of how pandemic stress has led to more anxiety and depression in individuals of all ages, impacting both mental and physical health.

Currently, people are stressing about the COVID-19 variants that have emerged and whether or not the vaccines available will offer the same protection as they do against the original virus. The UK variant is the most prevalent in the U.S., as well as being more virulent and transmittable. And what about those individuals who, unfortunately, suffered through the virus and are still experiencing symptoms for weeks/months with possible long-term effects. The unknown is scary!

The good news is there is a light at the end of the tunnel (and it's not a train). Students are returning to school at least a few days per week and entertainment events are beginning to reopen (Go Brewers!). Warmer weather is allowing restaurants to utilize their outdoor seating so social distancing can still be followed as customers increase in numbers. Certainly, more and more people are now qualifying for the COVID-19 vaccine and receiving it. Vaccination is bringing us a step closer to herd immunity and an end to this health crisis.

How we cope with the stress caused by the pandemic will impact our overall well-being for the long term. For information on healthy strategies to cope with stress, visit the “Health Education” tab on the Partners of WHA website.

Sue Schuelke, CHE Chair

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## Strategic Planning Sets Goals

The members of the Strategic Planning Committee met virtually February 17 and 22 to discuss and develop goals for 2021-2022. This past year presented unique challenges to health organizations, health care volunteers, and Partners leaders. Moving forward, we realize how important communication and leadership are in staying relevant in today's environment.

Our goal of **further development of leadership skills and implementing the mentor program** will continue from the 2019-2020 committee. Many hours of thought and research have already gone into the leadership toolkit, thanks to Bill McCollough and Jaci Fuller. Bill will continue to finalize a mentor list with representatives from each district.

Other goals are:

- **Improve communication between all levels of our organization.** State leaders, district boards, local organizations, volunteers, and directors of volunteers; and,
- **Improve and communicate the value of membership in Partners' organization.** One of the action steps was to set up a virtual “table” on LeaderPass for Advocacy Day 2021. Hope you didn't miss this! Thanks to Peg Larson and Leigh Ann Larson for completing this.

Appreciation goes to members of our committee for agreeing to work on various action steps toward accomplishing our goals, and to Leigh Ann Larson for your help.

Sherry Jelic, Strategic Planning Chair

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## Around the State

### **Cumberland Healthcare Volunteer Partners, Cumberland:**

An Easter Bake Sale was held April 2. Masks had to be used at all times in order to work this sale, which included decorated cookies and cupcakes, layer cakes or bundt cakes, cinnamon or caramel rolls, dinner rolls, pies, and other miscellaneous Easter treats. Also, as of March 15, 40 comfort blankets have been given to inpatients.

### **Oconomowoc Memorial Auxiliary and Volunteer Services, Oconomowoc:**

"Hello Spring" is the theme of the 2021 style show, luncheon, and raffle that will be held at The Golden Mast Inn in Okauchee Lake May 13. Proceeds will go toward purchasing equipment for the OB Department as well as other worthwhile causes.

### **Ripon Medical Center Auxiliary, Ripon:**

Lights of Love fundraising raised 43% more than last year's amount with a total of \$5,935, which goes toward the Scholarship Fund, which is used to help students going into the health field – way to go!

### **Sacred Heart Hospital Volunteer Partners, Eau Claire:**

There are staff, visitors, and volunteers who ride their bikes to the hospital but had no place to secure them. Therefore, the Volunteer Partners Council in 2019 voted to have a bike rack installed near the side entrance to the hospital. This was purchased by the Council and installed.

Kay Lyndahl, Editor

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*(Thanks to all who are now sending me their newsletters - however, many are still not keeping me in touch!)*

## Learning Opportunities Available

There are a couple of opportunities this fall to learn more about health care and your role in it. The Partners of WHA convention will be held October 5-7, 2021 in Madison. Convention Chair Terri Donlin has an article telling you about the wonderful opportunities being developed. We realize that most of the groups have not been able to fundraise and that the hospitals are struggling with the financial impacts of COVID-19. We are very fortunate to be able to offer two scholarships for first-time attendees of convention. Partners will pay your registration fee. You or your organization will be responsible for your expenses. The application is available on the Partners of WHA website ([partnersofwha.org](http://partnersofwha.org)).

The other opportunity is the result of a regional collaboration that Past President Jan Molaska started. The volunteer leadership from Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and North Dakota are planning a virtual convention in September. The planning is in the early stages, but we are expecting to have a fantastic lineup. If you are interested in participating or have suggestions for speakers, please contact Jan Molaska at [jmolaska@gmail.com](mailto:jmolaska@gmail.com) or 715-581-9304.

We are happy to be expanding opportunities for our members.

## Reaching Out Deadlines

Issue	Deadline
August 2021	Thurs., July 15, 2021
November 2021	Tues., Oct. 14, 2021
February 2022	Sat. Jan. 15, 2022
May 2022	Tues., April 12, 2022

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