

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

Spring Tours to be Virtual



Peg Larson

What odd times we are living in. Partners connects volunteers across the state, allowing them to share best practices and new ideas to improve the health of their communities. As we enter a new phase of the pandemic with vaccines available, I hope we can return to our normal volunteering rhythm. For most of us, this enforced sabbatical has been long and frustrating, but we have continued to support our communities by staying home. Partners has continued to connect

volunteers with information about health and public policy issues. We continue to network virtually.

We were able to hold our Annual Meeting, election, and installation virtually. On January 13, the officers met to accomplish the one task that can only be done in person – signing the bank paperwork. It was a different experience as we stood in the lobby as one person at a time went into the office with the banker to present identification and be added to the accounts. The process did give time for the “handoff” conversations about the new position that each person was taking. After we finished the individual moments with the banker, we all put our signatures on the various documents that are required. We then adjourned to a large conference room and talked about our hopes for the coming year.

Spring “Tour” will be via virtual meetings with each district, hosted by a local organization. We will elect and install new district chairs. In our current state, it is amazing how wonderful it is to see people on a screen! The meeting dates are included in this newsletter.

As we move through the summer, we hope that most people will be vaccinated. I recently received my first dose of the vaccine and have not had any trouble with my body’s immune response. I hope that you will also take advantage of the opportunity when it is offered.

If things go well, October 5 - 7, 2021 will find all of us together in person at the Marriott West in Madison for our convention, as planned. Terri Donlin is putting together a great slate of speakers and presentations for us. We will get to participate in the easy exchange of ideas and get to meet new people from all around the state!

In the meantime, stay well and know that your volunteer friends are a phone (or virtual) call away!

Peg Larson, 920-231-3005 (H); 920-420-1482 (C); pegvoluntr@hotmail.com

A Message from the President-Elect

Goals Set

I’d like to extend a very humble “thank you” for entrusting me with the position of President-Elect. It will be my honor to serve you, the Partners organization, and this position with dignity, tenacity, and integrity. Following in the “footsteps” of our new President, Peg Larson, will be a huge challenge, and serving alongside Julie Steiner, State Secretary and John Tully, State Treasurer, is a privilege I respect very much. With the cumulative personal experiences and energies we bring, I have every confidence the entire leadership can guide Partners of WHA through any challenges and changes that are presented.



Sharon Scott

As President-Elect, I am tasked with duties that include any by-laws changes or updates, tallying and distributing Honor Points, communicating with our seven district chairs, and serving on committees pertaining to Strategic Planning, Finance, and Executive – to be sure, little “grass will grow” under my feet during my term. I have identified several goals that I believe are attainable and will have positive results:

- Having passed our revised by-laws during the annual meeting in October 2019, it now follows, appropriately, to direct the By-Laws

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A Message from the President-Elect... continued from page 1

Committee's attention to reviewing and updating all leadership position descriptions along with our policies and procedures. Maintaining the clarity and integrity of all aspects of our by-laws is an ongoing process.

- With several newly installed district chairs, it is important to guide and counsel them in becoming effective leaders. There are many "tools" that can be incorporated; the one I find most successful and appreciated is simply COMMUNICATION – ensuring the district chairs have all the information needed to pass on to their local organizations to make the whole Partners organization strong and fulfilling for our members.
- Honor Points have been a focus of discussion for an exceptionally long time. Revisions will still be discussed.

I have always been extremely proud describing myself as a health care volunteer. We volunteers are an incredible and diverse group so eagerly and passionately giving of our treasures of strength of character, special talents, and time. Collectively, we make such an enormous difference in other's lives and our communities.

As we move into this new year, the challenges and changes we faced in 2020 still resonate. We have all missed our volunteer duties within our health care facilities, in-person meetings/convention, we have learned to maneuver in a "virtual" world, and perhaps most importantly, we realize how very much we miss one another. Sadly, we cannot dismiss the reality of the COVID-19 crisis and the sundry affects that each of us have endured.

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.

Sharon Scott
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Important Dates

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Host</u>
2/17/2021	Strategic Planning	
2/22/2021	Spring Board	WHA
2/23/2021	Spring Board	WHA
2/24/2021	Spring Board	WHA
4/4/2021	Easter	
4/14/2021	Advocacy Day	Madison
4/28/2021	Southeastern District	Aurora West Allis
4/29/2021	Lakes District	St. Nicholas, Sheboygan
5/11/2021	West Central District	Sacred Heart, EauClaire
5/12/2021	Northwestern District	St. Mary's, Superior
5/13/2021	North Central District	
5/19/2021	Southern District	Janesville
5/20/2021	Western District	Boscobel
10/4/2021	Fall Board	Madison
10/5/2021	Fall Board / Convention	Madison
10/6/2021	Convention	Madison
10/7/2021	Convention	Madison

Ready or Not! Here We Come 2021!



Leigh Ann Larson

As we look forward to 2021, it is difficult to not feel a variety of emotions – excitement, nervousness, apprehension, hope, fear, and wonder. Many questions also come to mind – Will 2021 be like 2020? When will we get back to "normal?" Will we ever get back to "normal?" When can we hug our family and friends? No one, for certain, knows the answers to these questions. We can

only move forward with what we do know.

And what we know is this – the vaccine is out and, despite some bumps in the road with distribution, it is getting to health care facilities and is being administered. We have also learned some lessons. We know the actions we each can take to stop the spread of the virus and what we can do to help support our local hospitals and public health departments by being good role models.

At WHA, we are moving forward with our plans and goals for the new year, based upon what we are hearing from our member hospitals. Most of our education will be virtual for the 1st half of the year, while education for the 2nd half will hopefully be a mixture of virtual and in-person, but only time will tell.

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Ready or Not! Here We Come 2021! ...continued from page 2

Have you saved the date for Advocacy Day 2021??? It is April 14 and registration will be open by the time this newsletter is published. It will be a virtual event in which WHA has partnered with a professional learning platform, LeaderPass. LeaderPass is a user-friendly system with a Netflix “look and feel.” We will provide training materials to help you maneuver the site, but feel that you will easily be able to access and use the platform. More information to come on that!

I look forward to a positive and productive year with you. Please continue to take care and be safe!

Leigh Ann S. Larson

WHA Vice President of Education and Marketing, and Partners of WHA Liaison

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Save The Date for WHA’s Virtual Advocacy Day



Mark your calendar now for the Wisconsin Hospital Association’s (WHA’s) Advocacy Day 2021, scheduled for **Wednesday, April 14**. This year, WHA has contracted with the professional virtual event platform [LeaderPass](#) to deliver this event to advocates across the state virtually.

While the day’s virtual format will be a little different than years past, attendees can still expect to hear from a great lineup of speakers, including an opening keynote address by Frank Sesno. Sesno is an internationally recognized journalist with more than 30 years of experience reporting from around the world. Well known as a television anchor, White House correspondent, and talk show host with CNN, he is also a nationally

renowned moderator who has engaged some of the world’s leading personalities.

Attendees are also encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to meet with their legislators and/or their staff virtually at Advocacy Day 2021. Specific times, in 30-minutes intervals, are set aside on April 14, 15, and 16 for these meetings. WHA will take care of the scheduling and will inform advocates of their meeting dates and times and provide instructions to join the Zoom meetings.

WHA encourages and invites hospital CEOs, CFOs, managers, nurse executives, quality managers, hospital volunteers, hospital trustees, WHA Hospitals Education & Advocacy Team (HEAT) grassroots members, Partners of WHA members, WHA corporate members and any other hospital staff interested in helping to shape the future of health care in Wisconsin communities to attend.

With the continued prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the forecasted long-term effects of the virus on hospital and health system operations, finances, and workforce, adding your voice to Advocacy Day this year is more important than ever.

There is no registration fee to participate in Advocacy Day, but pre-registration is required. Stay tuned for more updates on WHA’s [website](#), including how to register (after the New Year) and an announcement on the bipartisan legislative panel participants.

WHA members are also encouraged to stay informed of issues affecting Wisconsin’s health care system and join thousands of others in making the voice of Wisconsin hospitals heard loud and clear. By [signing up for HEAT](#), you will receive:

- HEAT Alerts on important, timely public policy facing the governor, state Legislature or Congress that could impact Wisconsin hospitals and health care in the state;
- An invitation to WHA’s annual Advocacy Day, where you will join more than 1,100 hospital administrators, employees, trustees, volunteers, physicians, patients, and others passionate about protecting Wisconsin’s high-quality, high-value health care system as they lobby in the state Capitol;
- Periodic public policy updates keeping you informed of the status and progress of legislative priorities; and
- Election resources, so you know where your candidates stand on health care issues.

Be an advocate, speak up!

SIGN-UP FOR HEAT



Public Policy Education Report



Bill McCullough

A past article in *Reaching Out* addressed the subject of “Impacting the High Cost of Prescription Drugs.” In that article, a number of concerns were expressed to include: 1) a substantial increase in drug spending by hospitals, 18.5% from 2015-2017; 2) concern that “Drug discount Sample Programs” might disguise drug offerings to make users more dependent on name brand vs. generic brands; and 3) the federal government, through the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services (HHS), could not negotiate the price of drugs covered under the Medicare prescription drug benefit.

The [October 1, 2020 WHA newsletter, *The Valued Voice*](#), featured an action taken by 70 health care leaders who signed and sent a [letter](#) to The Honorable Alex M. Azar II, HHS Secretary. The letter was an effort to push back on drug manufacturers’ actions related to the 340B drug discount program. Manufacturers, including Eli Lilly, AstraZeneca, Merck, Sanofi, and Novartis, have recently undertaken actions that appear to be in direct conflict with what is required of them under the 340B program. Specifically, some have announced they will no longer offer their drugs at the discounted 340B rate for contract pharmacies and some have announced they will no longer offer the discount unless 340B program participants provide extensive additional data. The letter stated that the pharmaceutical manufacturers’ actions were in direct conflict with the 340B statute and the intent of Congress to protect access to health care for vulnerable Americans.

A [related article](#) appeared on this subject in the December 17, 2020 *Valued Voice*. Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul joined 27 attorneys general (AGs) in urging HHS to enforce 340B drug discounts, now being denied by a number of drug manufacturers. In the [letter](#), the AGs noted the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) recognizes the important role contract pharmacies play in dispensing drugs to safety-net providers under the 340B program. The letter further stated that drug companies enjoy some of the highest profits in health care and continue to increase prices for safety-net health care providers during a pandemic where patient care and financial challenges exist.

Two actions were taken at the federal legislative level in 2019 to address a multitude of issues. On July 25, 2019, the Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act (PDPRA) was approved by the Senate Finance Committee seeking to address issues that affect Medicare beneficiaries. The other was a bill introduced September 19, 2019 by the House and passed on December 12, 2019 – H.R.3, Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act. While both address the pricing of prescription drugs, health care coverage costs and overall public health, H.R.3 requires HHS to negotiate prices for certain drugs under the Medicare prescription drug benefit. While both federal initiatives provide considerable potential cost savings to consumers, much more conversation and analysis will likely develop in the coming months under a new administration. We will stay tuned and provide updates as available.

Bill McCullough, PPE Chair
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Strategic Planning to Plan for Next Two Years

Congratulations! We’ve welcomed in 2021 with new hope, new perspectives, and a willingness to get back to a life that has, in many ways, been put on hold since March of 2020. This year will continue to pose challenges to the way meetings and business are conducted in our local, district, and state organizations. But we’re up for the challenge and ready to get to work. Partners has a new board, welcoming some past members, but also volunteers who are members of the board for the first time.

Strategic planning, as stated under the policy/procedure section of Partners, is a committee “that shall study and evaluate organizational functions, future objectives, and projected resources as they relate to the purposes of the Partners of WHA, Inc.” Our work is to create objectives and set goals for not only Partners’ immediate needs, but also where we see ourselves as an organization in the long term. This means addressing key issues, clarifying Partners’ vision and goals, and creating the steps/plan to achieve these.

The Strategic Planning Committee members for 2021-2023 are: myself as chair, Leigh Ann Larson, Peg Larson, Sharon Scott, Julie Steiner, John Tully, Bill McCullough, Sue Schuelke, Judy Jaggard, and Patsy Pippin. We will be virtually meeting in mid-February to begin to develop what our work will be for the next two years. We should have a plan to report at the full board meeting February 24-25.

Thank you for your support of Partners and all members who work together and value our Wisconsin health care!

Sherry Jelic, Strategic Planning Chair
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Community Health Education Report

Infectious Disease



Sue Schuelke

Many of us were probably hoping that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) would be a thing of the past as we entered 2021 and life would return to normal. Although that is not the case, so much has been learned about the virus and progress made to help bring an end to this pandemic.

With vaccines now available, it is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that everyone should get immunized against the coronavirus unless one has other circumstances (ie allergic reactions to any ingredient in the vaccines available). If you are uncertain about receiving the vaccine, know that the vaccine does not use the live virus so it does not give you COVID-19 and it does not affect your DNA in any way.

Vaccines in the United States are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) after extensive tests for safety and effectiveness. To start, vaccines are developed in a laboratory. If the vaccine shows potential, testing is done on animals before clinical (human) trials begin. The clinical trials are done in three phases using several hundred volunteers to look at side effects, dosage, safety, and if the vaccine is effective. The FDA also inspects the vaccine manufacturing sites to make certain they are complying with good manufacturing standards and regulations.

Once the vaccine is approved for use and administered, vaccine safety monitoring begins with the use of several safety surveillance systems used by FDA and CDC scientists. Data is collected on adverse events (serious side effects) to determine if the adverse event is truly linked to the vaccine and continued studies on safety and long-term effectiveness.

The COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the U.S. through Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna require two doses for full protection. The body needs time to build immunity, about 1-2 weeks after receiving the second dose of vaccine.

The COVID-19 vaccines will help get us to “herd immunity” and ultimately put this pandemic behind us. So, continue to follow the safety guidelines set forth by the CDC as well as the Wisconsin initiative: “You Stop the Spread.” It’s important not to let your guard down!

- Continue to wear a mask (see [Infectious Disease article](#) on Partners of WHA website under Health Education).
- Continue to stay at least six feet apart from other people.
- Continue to social distance.
- Continue to wash hands often.
- Continue to have HOPE!

For more information on COVID-19, visit any of these websites: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), [fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov), and [dhs.Wisconsin.gov](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov).



Sue Schuelke, CHE Chair

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Convention Theme: “Together We Build a Better Future”

As convention chair, I am genuinely excited both with the venue selected – Madison Marriott West Hotel and Convention Center and the opportunity to work with the Southern District team to plan an amazing event for all of you. The convention is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 5 through Thursday, October 7, 2021.**

The hotel staff is eagerly awaiting our return and are excited to share the remodeling that has taken place in 2020. Volunteers from the Southern District are in the process of planning an educational, spirited, and enjoyable three days of speakers, workshops, delicious food, and the opportunity to network with fellow volunteers from throughout our great state of Wisconsin.

We all look forward to greeting and renewing friendships and ideas with you!!!! MARK YOUR CALENDARS now to share in the fun and fellowship with your fellow volunteers – each of you are “Working Together to Build a Better Future.” Please stay tuned for more exciting information in the coming months leading up to the convention.

Terri Donlin, 2021 Convention Chair

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Around the State

Superior Hospital Auxiliary, Superior:

A grant for \$995 was approved from the Auxiliary to purchase a washer and dryer to use for cleaning masks and patients' clothing – already done and being used!

Volunteer Partners of Spooner Health, Spencer:

This group had a "No Bake" bake sale and raised \$520 - volunteers were very generous!

Partners With Our Lady of Victory Hospital, Stanley:

Sent cards from their Partners group to co-workers, friends, relatives, shut-ins, COVID heros, as well as hospital associates, clinic workers, service workers, ambulance departments, city workers, teachers, etc. Let them know you appreciate yours! Remember to sign your name, your hospital, and volunteer organization.

Kay Lyndahl, Editor

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(Just a reminder, I need your newsletters, whether it be by "snail mail" or "e-mail"!!!)

WAVE Award Adds One New Category

It is time to think about the 2021 Wisconsin Awards for Volunteer Excellence (WAVE). This award is to recognize outstanding contributions of organized volunteer programs.

These following four awards that have been given out in previous years, plus one new award category, are as follows:

1. **COMMUNITY SERVICE** - Programs that are in the assisted health care organization in the design and delivery of services or programs of measurable impact to the well being of individuals and/or the community.
2. **FUNDRAISING** - Programs that are designed and implemented in an innovative approach to fundraising that benefited the health care organization or the community.
3. **IN-SERVICE** - Programs that are designed and implemented innovative services and addresses the needs or challenges within the health care organization.
4. **COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND/OR COLLABORATION** - Programs that are designed and implemented and innovative approach with external partners to address the needs or challenges within the health care organization or the community.
5. **PUBLIC POLICY (new category)** - Programs and activities designed to identify and positively impact health care policies and legislation in our local communities and the state.

I think we should consider expanding the criteria this year to include new projects and adaptations related to COVID-19.

The 2021 WAVE applications will reflect the changes before being sent to local Partners/auxiliary presidents.

Jeanne Tatro, Chair

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Reaching Out Deadlines

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