

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 Partners of WHA President

Happy New Year



Sue Lynch

I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas season with their family and friends.

I am so honored to have been elected President of Partners of WHA for the next two years. I look forward to working with all of you as I begin to serve in this very important role.

On January 14, I held a “retreat” in Wisconsin Dells with our leadership team to map out our goals for the upcoming year and beyond. I believe it is very

important to engage your leadership team in setting the agenda for the next two years—working with them and asking for their ideas, rather than just mine—how they envision making Partners a better organization.

Plans are well under way for the 2013 Spring Tour and Convention. Advocacy Day in Madison has been set and our 2013 Community Health Project will address Dementia and Alzheimers. Strategic Planning will play an important role in carrying out our goals. This committee will serve as a check point for many of us to make sure we accomplish what we say we are going to do as leaders. Our top priority continues to be membership growth and retention. During this year, a CD will be made for all to share with your membership along with an updated brochure to outline just who we are and why you would want to become a part and or remain a Partners group in your community—a tool we hope you will find useful. We also addressed the financial stability of Partners. My goal will be to make sure your dollars are well spent and directed to activities that will benefit all in this organization. Leadership training is another area we need to address starting at the state and district levels right on down to the local groups. If I have heard it once, I have heard it a million times—we need new volunteers to serve as officers and committee/project chairman. I am hoping at the convention that we are able to provide some positive and new ideas on how to recruit the next generation of leaders for Partners.

Now, let’s begin this journey together. I look forward to the tasks ahead and know that Together Everyone Accomplishes our Mission (T.E.A.M.)!

Sue Lynch, President
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A Message from the President-Elect

Year at a Glance

My name is Bonnie Rose Olson, sometimes known as the “hat lady.” Thank you for your vote of confidence in me as President-elect. I have served Partners of WHA for four years as



Bonnie Olson

Community Health Education Chair and two years as treasurer on the state level. I am thrilled to serve with Sue Lynch. She has assembled an award-winning team. We are champions for health care volunteers, especially the challenges facing hospitals today. We are on first base now, as this is the first Reaching Out newsletter of 2013.

Each district chair should have a Leadership Manual; the previous chair should have passed it on. If you don’t have one, please contact me. You can also access the manual on the website at [Partners of WHA.org](http://PartnersofWHA.org). It is in the process of having a new webmaster. Patience is a virtue! **Please check from time to time to see the changes that will be posted.**

Your board members, under the leadership of Sue Lynch, recently met to plan 2013 events. We will have a Spring Board meeting at WHA headquarters in Madison, March 24-26 with the district chairs. The district chairs are a very important link in communication. You, as a Partners group or auxiliary, should communicate your change of local officers, president’s reports, honor points,

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***A Message from the President-elect
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and events through your district chairperson(s). They in turn give the data to Sue Lynch, Partners President. She gives it to the webmaster to be updated on the website.

Thank you in advance for sharing your thoughts and opinions with us as we strive to better serve you, our valued volunteers. We're looking forward to seeing you on Spring Tour; we enjoy hearing about your local and district activities, fundraising projects, and visiting with you. Think about having a fundraiser at your Spring District meeting—it helps your district defray expenses.

*Bonnie R. Olson, President-Elect
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Set Calendar for State Convention

October 8 – 10, 2013

We are well into the process of producing a fun and educational convention for you this year at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells from October 8 -10, 2013.

Plans are too preliminary to give you any details yet, but watch for them in the near future. I can tell you, it will be a baseball theme, "Hit a Home Run," and that we have some firm ideas for workshops, many of which are well on the way to confirmation. We are also working on some favorite repeat vendors as well as a couple of new ones to tempt your shopping skills at the convention and possibly use for your very own gift shops. Start packing your bags; it is going to be a great convention!

*Mary Licht, 2013 Convention Chair
Marylicht2608@yahoo.com*

From the Treasurer

Partners of WHA, Inc. began its new fiscal year January 1, 2013. Therefore, as the Partners treasurer, I will be preparing dues invoices for the 2013 fiscal year. Partners of WHA, Inc. dues are one dollar for each local member as listed on the local president's report due submitted January 31, 2013. Honorary members are not included. Twenty cents of each dollar collected is returned to the member's district for the district's operating expenses. Districts do not collect dues. Dues invoices should be sent out to local presidents early in April. Dues must be paid by June 30, 2013 to be eligible for "Honor Points" at this year's convention.

As a reminder to each district chair, the district's financial report and budgets are due to Partners of WHA, Inc.'s treasurer March 15 of each year. Financial reports and budgets may be sent to me via e-mail at ralphspindler@att.net or by regular mail at W358 N5956 Surrey Drive, Oconomowoc, WI 53066.

The Partners of WHA, Inc. Annual Financial Report for 2012 will be distributed at our Annual Convention and Meeting at the Kalahari in Wisconsin Dells October 8 - 10, 2013. The Annual Financial Report for 2012 may also be available upon request after May 15.

Ralph Spindler, Treasurer

Newsletter Names from Across the State

Interesting names for hospital volunteer newsletters have come across my desk when I receive them from the local hospitals and thought I would share them with all of you.

- ***Heart Beat*** – Eagle River Memorial Hospital
- ***News Watch*** – Aurora Lakeland Medical Center Associates, Elkhorn
- ***The Fortifier*** - Fort Health Care, Fort Atkinson
- ***Bellinteer*** – Bellin Hospital, Green Bay
- ***News and Views*** – Richland Hospital, Richland
- ***In Touch*** – Oconomowoc Memorial Hospital and Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital
- ***Communique*** – Aspirus Volunteers, Wausau
- ***POSH*** – Partners of Stoughton Hospital, Stoughton
- ***Auxiliary Capsule*** – Mayo Clinic Health System - Franciscan Healthcare, La Crosse
- ***Helping Hands*** – Mercy Health System, Janesville
- ***Aux Taux Monitor*** – Door County Memorial Hospital, Sturgeon Bay
- ***Forecast*** – Langlade Hospital, Antigo
- ***Stethoscope*** – Partners of St. Joseph's Hospital, Chippewa Falls
- ***Reaching Out*** (same as Partners of WHA newsletter) – Partners of Black River Memorial Hospital, Black River Falls
- ***Helping Hands*** – Mercy Health System Association of Volunteers
- ***Focus*** – Riverview Hospital Auxiliary, Wisconsin Rapids
- ***Connections*** - Grant Regional Health Center Auxiliary, Lancaster

Kay Lyndahl, WHA Reaching Out Editor

WHA President's Report

Wisconsin hospitals and health systems faced steep challenges in 2012, but that didn't deter them from their missions to provide high-quality, high-value, patient care in communities across the state. As a volunteer at your hospital, I know you know this full well.

The Wisconsin Hospital Association also remained engaged and committed, working to ensure that our members lead the nation in delivering high quality, affordable, and accessible health care services. Each year, the partnership between WHA and our members is strengthened, and 2012 was no different. I believe this strong partnership is one reason why WHA continues to be successful in our advocacy efforts, including both at the state and federal levels.

WHA highly values and depends on our members' participation on WHA councils, task forces, and committees. This year that participation was at an all time high. In addition, the 2012 WHA Board provided its time, expertise, experience, and vision to produce excellent work products, recommendations, and motions. All of these efforts helped guide our Association forward in 2012.

Expertise, experience, and vision are all hallmarks of Wisconsin's health care leaders, which is why I believe it is an honor to work with our members. They are some of the country's leading health care innovators who are not waiting to see what the future brings, but rather, are helping to shape that future. We are fortunate in Wisconsin to have leaders such as these who are willing to roll up their sleeves and lend their expertise to find solutions to the complex problems that are facing our industry. That is what they did in 2012 and that is what we know will happen in the year ahead.

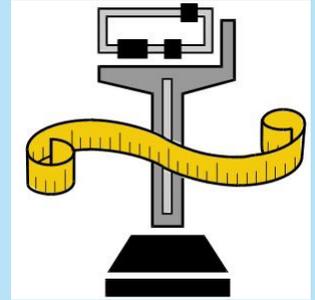
As I close, I would encourage you to take a look at WHA's 2012 Results piece. It provides a glimpse at our major advocacy efforts, quality initiatives, and program activities from the past year. I think it will give you a snapshot of all that we strive to do on your behalf. You may view the 2012 Results piece online at www.wha.org/pubArchive/special_reports/2012Results.pdf.

On behalf of WHA and all of our staff, thank you for your continued volunteer commitment to your hospital. Rest assured, WHA will do everything we can to help Wisconsin hospitals in 2013.

Steve Brenton, President
Wisconsin Hospital Association

Oversized Portions Doom Weight Problems

- How many people fill their plates until there's no room for another thing? Now is the time to think about filling only half your plate. Then substitute with more fruits and vegetables.
- Avoid big snack bags. Buy potato chips in small bags for one person. If you do buy a bigger bag, package in small baggies when you get home.
- Read labels, as one package may be servings for four and need to be broken down.
- Store leftovers into individual-sized containers and not on one big plate.
- Curb your appetite before a big meal by eating a salad with low fat dressing or a broth-based vegetable soup.
- Rethink meat as a side and not a main dish. Therefore, eat more vegetables, fruits, and healthy grains to fill your plate.
- Use small dishes and glasses at a meal. Serve healthy foods with a large spoon and a smaller spoon for things like gravies and heavy sauces.
- Your stomach needs about 20 minutes to digest your meal, so eat slower. Take sips of water between bites and don't expect seconds. Put the leftover food in the refrigerator before being tempted for seconds.
- While eating out in restaurants, ask for a lunch-sized portion of a dinner entrée, share a dish, or get a take-out container as soon as you order; then put half the meal away before you even start eating.
- And then there's the buffet - stay clear of them - order off the menu!



Happy eating!

“Everyone has the potential to give something back.”

- Princess Diana

Fiscal Cliff Law Cuts Hospital Payments...Again

Your Active Participation Needed

On January 1, 2013, the U.S. Senate and U.S. House approved the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (ATRA). President Obama signed the legislation into law the very next day. That action temporarily averted the so-called "fiscal cliff" that faced the nation at the end of 2012. The Senate approved the bill 89-8 and the House by a vote of 257 to 167. Wisconsin's two U.S. Senators, Kohl (D), and Johnson (R), voted in favor. Wisconsin's Representatives Baldwin (D), Kind (D), Moore (D), Ribble (R), and Ryan (R) voted in favor while Reps. Duffy (R), Petri (R), and Sensenbrenner (R) voted against.



Key health-related provisions under the ATRA include:

- A 60-day delay in the across-the-board cuts known as "sequester." These Medicare cuts will impact Wisconsin hospitals to the tune of an estimated \$1 billion. The cuts will now go into effect March 1, 2013. The sequester cuts are on top of an estimated \$2.6 billion in Medicare cuts Wisconsin hospitals are already seeing because of the federal health care law.
- A one-year patch to Medicare physician payments. Physicians were facing a 27 percent reduction in Medicare payments without this patch. The patch is effective through December 31, 2013. Unfortunately, the patch is largely paid for by cutting hospital payments, including the one listed below.
- Wisconsin hospitals will be cut approximately \$161 million over four years for what is called a "documentation and coding offset." Nationally, hospitals are cut \$10.5 billion. This cut is a continuation of a trend by Congress of cutting hospitals to pay for other federal programs or issues. WHA strongly objects to this trend.
- An extension of important Medicare hospital payments, including the Low Volume Adjustment and the Medicare Dependent Hospital programs. WHA strongly supported both extensions which help 15 Wisconsin hospitals who were facing a loss of \$13 million without these payments.

"WHA appreciates the extension of important payments like the Medicare Dependent Hospital program and Low Volume Adjustment," said WHA VP of External Relations & Member Advocacy Jenny Boese. "But we are disappointed that federal decision-makers continue to target hospital payments to fund other programs and providers. This has to stop."

To push back against these cuts, WHA has aggressively implemented an advocacy campaign, Protect Hospital Care. "Protect" efforts have included no less than five trips to Washington, DC to advocate personally with members of Congress, HEAT members sending thousands of email messages to legislators, multiple town halls, and listening sessions with legislators among other activities. "Protect" activities will continue in the coming months.

Unfortunately, WHA expects hospital payments to be targeted again in February as Congress still faces debt ceiling negotiations, must permanently address sequester, and make other fiscal decisions. As volunteers, WHA knows you care deeply about your hospitals. You need to let your Members of Congress know how passionate you are about those hospitals. To do so, please log onto our "Protect Hospital Care" site for more information at www.wha.org/protect-hospital-care.aspx (User ID: advocacy / Password: whagrassroots) and take action on all of our HEAT action alerts.

Feel free to contact WHA's Jenny Boese at jboese@wha.org with questions on what you can do help to protect hospital care in your local community.

Ann Bergmann Appointed to AHA Position

The Board of Trustees of the American Hospital Association (AHA) recently appointed Ann Bergmann of Cumberland, Wisconsin to serve as Board chair for the Committee on Volunteers. The Committee on Volunteers (COV) is composed of 15 members from throughout the U.S. and is the recognized body of AHA that is concerned with the role and responsibilities of organized volunteers and auxiliaries.

In addition to responsibilities for member communication and assistance in policy development, she will lead the committee on advising the Association on programs and services directed to volunteers and auxiliaries, will participate in AHA grassroots advocacy and policy development, and help implement AHA policy and programs in hospitals and health systems. Ann begins this role January 1, 2013.

Ann is currently a member of the COV Committee, past president of Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association, and serves as Partners of WHA Public Policy Education Chairperson for the Northwestern District of Wisconsin. She is a member of Partners of Cumberland Health Care.



Ann Bergmann

Community Health Education Report



Gloria Sparacino

Our President, Sue Lynch, has targeted Alzheimers and Dementia as her health project for us to explore during her term of office. As I have not had anyone in my immediate family with this problem, I thought it would be a very difficult thing to work on. However, there is so much information available, that I find I am learning much about a problem that should be of concern to people over the age of 45.

Alzheimers presents a challenge to those affected who during their lives have been fruitful, productive people. This may be the most challenging thing they have ever, or ever will, have to deal with. Not only does it affect the person with the disease but also their families. Later, we will be exploring how it affects families, but for now, we should look at the person with the disease.

People over the age of 65 are usually affected by the disease. Onset is very subtle and the disease progresses slowly over years, producing a decline in the intellect called Dementia by physicians.

Typically, Alzheimers affects the memory of recent events presenting problems with keeping appointments, names, new travel routes, and/or absorbing information from reading or watching television. The mind usually retains events of past memories for a much longer time. As the disease progresses, the person will experience gradual communication problems, such as loss of words, not understanding the meaning of words, difficulty solving problems, being unable to handle household functions, or difficulty with personal care. They then can begin to withdraw from society and need more support from caregivers.

A person diagnosed with Alzheimers can expect to live an average of 7 to 9 years less than a person not affected. For more information, simply search Alzheimer's and Dementia.

The above information was taken from "100 Questions and Answers About Alzheimers Disease" by Thomas M. Wisniewski, MD, and Marcin Sadowski, MD, PHD.

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Public Policy Education Report

I am honored to have been asked to continue as Partners Public Policy chair for another term by Partners President, Sue Lynch. I am looking forward to working with the other members of the board and the district PPE chairs, as well.



Diane Westbrook

November 2012 Elections:

- Nationally, the U.S. Senate remains under Democratic control, and the U.S. House remains under Republican control.
- The newest members to Wisconsin's Congressional delegation are: Senator Tammy Baldwin, a Madison native and U.S. Representative Mark Pocan from Madison.
- The Wisconsin State Legislature is completely controlled by Republicans. Republicans control the State Assembly 60-39 and control the State Senate 18-15. Twenty-seven new legislators were elected.
- Governor, Scott Walker will introduce the biennial state budget in February. One of the major issues the Wisconsin Hospital Association has been and will continue to be engaged in is what happens with the Medicaid budget. Deliberations on the state budget generally take six months, so will consume the bulk of the Legislature's time until summer.
- Federally, Congress must still address major fiscal issues, including what to do with the nation's debt ceiling and whether or not to address automatic spending cuts, known as "sequester," which are slated to begin March 1, 2013. Wisconsin hospitals will see cuts under the sequester process, plus hospital reimbursements for programs like Medicare and Medicaid continue to be targeted for cuts by Congress and the President.

To learn how you can help fight for your local hospital and against these cuts, log onto:

www.wha.org/protect-hospital-care.aspx (ID: advocacy & password: whagrassroots)

Now more than ever, we need to be aware and be better advocates for our hospitals. The easiest way to become engaged is by becoming a member of HEAT (Hospitals Education & Advocacy Team). You will receive periodic alerts from Jenny Boese, vice president of external relations & member advocacy at WHA. These alerts will not only provide a vehicle to use as a way to contact your legislators, but a way to help you speak up for hospitals during state negotiations on the budget and federal negotiations on the debt ceiling. To join and at no cost,

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Around the State

Partners of St. Joseph's Hospital, Chippewa Falls:

Members collected Vintage Accessories for a sale along with an annual Craft Sale. Jewelry, purses, and scarves were many of the items donated. Great way to clean out an attic!

Oconomowoc Memorial Hospital Volunteers, Oconomowoc:

A new tribute called "Success Stories – Helping Hands – Touching Lives" has been implemented. It begins with a sheet of paper that is passed on to their volunteers to share a positive experience or encounter with a patient, family member, or visitor at their hospital. These experiences are jotted down and are posted in their Auxiliary Display Case located in the Main Lobby and published in their *In Touch* newsletter. What a great way to give the hospital and volunteers a "pat-on-the-back!"

Auxiliary of St. Vincent Hospital, Green Bay:

Volunteers were included in a Chicago Holiday Shopping trip in November to see the downtown, shops, and lights. Now that's a full day!

Partners of Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital, Prairie du Chien:

Partners presented 15 mammo capes in a variety of pink fabrics to Medical Imaging just in time for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The new design makes it easier and more comfortable when getting a mammogram.

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please access the HEAT site at: www.wha.org/heat-grassroots-advocacy.aspx. Let this be the year that you become a member of HEAT!

End of the Year Reports

- Local PPE reports to the District PPE Chairs are due January 31
- District PPE reports to the State PPE Chair are due March 1
- Report forms can be found at the Partners website: www.partnersofwha.org

Advocacy Day

Advocacy Day is an annual legislative event designed to motivate and educate participants on health-related issues and grassroots advocacy opportunities. As in the past, WHA will assist in scheduling afternoon visits to legislators and staff at the Capitol. Transportation is provided to the Capitol. The event at the Monona Terrace is free and includes lunch.

I encourage you to read the articles by Steve Brenton and Jenny Boese in this issue of *Reaching Out* as well. The articles discuss the fiscal cliff's impact on Wisconsin hospitals.

Thank you for your continued support of the hospitals in your communities and throughout Wisconsin!

Diane Westbrook, PPE Chair
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"Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow; don't walk behind me, I may not lead; walk beside me and just be my friend."

– Albert Camus

Reaching Out Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
May 2013	Mon., April 15, 2013
August 2013	Mon., July 15, 2013
November 2013	Tues., October 15, 2013
February 2014	Wed., January 15, 2014

Partners *Reaching Out* is published four times a year by Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc. Visit the Partners Web site at www.partnersofwha.org. Direct questions or comments to:

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