

# Friends of VMH

Vernon Memorial Healthcare, Vernon Memorial Healthcare, Viroqua

*May 2021*

## News from Your President

Hello Friends of VMH!! I hope everyone is well. I know we are all looking forward to getting together again.

We had a very productive meeting with VMH Chief Financial Officer, Karen Traynor on April 16th. Karen is currently our VMH liaison. Our discussion focused around our "normal" calendar of events and which of those events we might look forward to hosting again. Karen will be working closely with the Friends Executive Committee as we make plans to slowly begin meeting and fundraising.

If you have not heard, we have quietly opened the Gift Shop to VMH staff. The shop began operating again on April 15th and will be open Monday thru Thursday from 11 to 1. Thanks to Jessica Addington, a Friends member and VMH staff member for showing us proper cleaning techniques and instructing us on the masks and protective shields or glasses we must wear. VMH Administration has asked that we limit the number of volunteers we have manning the shop at this point in time. Thus far

Shelley Dobbe, Nancy Welch, Trudy Wallin, Barb Casper, Julie Steiner and Sig Lind will take turns staffing it until we are given the okay to be open longer.

We were able to hold the Nutman Sale April 15th and 16th.

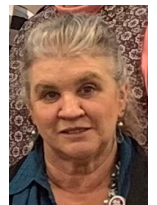
Unfortunately, the Geranium sale will not be held. Hardy Vines is simply not able to supply us on short notice. We have, however, been given the okay to hold our Mum sale in August/September.

We have opted not to hold a Taco Luncheon this year, but we have

requested permission from Administration to hold a Brat Sale in August.

We are hopeful that we will be able to begin meeting as a group again for our Fall Membership Luncheon on September 14th.

Sending you a smile to brighten your day until I can give you one in person!



DJ Brown

## Calling All Seamstresses

Looking for a fairly easy but rewarding sewing project? We are now making coordinating bibs and burp cloths for the newborn gift baskets in our Obstetrics Department.

These items are less time consuming than the nursing pillows and stuffed animals sewn by Veronica Tresner, Pat Oldenburg, Diane and DJ Brown.

Friends of VMH will supply you with the patterns and reimburse

you for the fabric.

We could use some additional help so that this project doesn't become a burden on just a few individuals.

Please contact DJ at 632-1313 or Julie at 606-0892 if you would like to learn more. As they say, "many hands make light work."



## Speaking of \$\$\$\$\$\$

Greetings Friends! As you might guess, our treasury has had a very quiet year.

The Money Market balance is \$68,072.61. Our Operating account balance is \$1,345.46. In 2020 and 2021 we continued to award healthcare scholarships in partnership with the VMH Foundation.

Our only other expense has been fabric and supplies for the newborn gift baskets, reflecting the sewing that was continued by our members at home.



Trudy Wallin

# Advocacy Day 2021

## Reauthorization of Critical Hospital Funding Requested

WHA's Advocacy Day 2021 was held virtually Wednesday, April 14th.

VMH Friends, Julie Steiner and Phyllis Malin joined nearly 1,000 hospital leaders and volunteers from around the state in discussing key priorities for Wisconsin hospitals.

Gov. Tony Evers, former CNN White House Correspondent Frank Sesno and a bipartisan legislative panel all spoke to attendees.

In conjunction with WHA Advocacy Day, 108 hospital and health system leaders from across Wisconsin submitted a letter to the state Legislature's Joint Finance Committee calling on the Legislature to

permanently reauthorize critical hospital funding through the Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) program to avoid a \$100 million cut to hospitals in the next budget. "Throughout the pandemic, every function within our hospital was utilized or redeployed in response to this pandemic – all facets of our operations were tested," wrote the health care leaders. "But when your constituents needed us, we were there." Leaders from across the state discussed how hospitals cared for Wisconsin communities throughout the pandemic, focusing on challenges hospitals faced to keep their facilities staffed and

with rising labor and supply costs. The leaders said that many of these challenges will remain post-pandemic. "The solutions to these challenges require us to sustain, not cut, critical funding to our state's hospitals," said health system and hospital leaders in their letter to state lawmakers. The letter went on to state core challenges hospitals face, including ongoing underfunding from the Medicaid program. "The pandemic should not skew anyone's perspective on the fundamental reimbursement challenge we faced pre-pandemic, during the pandemic and will need to continue to address post-pandemic.

program under-reimburses hospitals for the cost of care they provide." "The need for Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) funding is not lessened by COVID, if anything it makes the resources you provide through DSH even more important," stated the hospital leaders.



## Western District Spring Meeting via Virtual Platform

Thursday, May 20

9:00 am

**Donna Nelson will be  
administered the oath of office as  
our new Western District Chair  
Congratulations Donna!**



Partners of WHA virtual Spring Board Meeting

## Community Health Education Report

Masks. Lockdown. Quarantine. Those are a few of the words that sum up life during the COVID-19 pandemic. However if you look deeper you'll also find: Togetherness. Opportunity. We are in this together and have all been affected by this pandemic in one way or another. We also have new opportunities to emerge from this time grateful and thankful. I know I will never

take for granted the opportunities to spend time with family and friends, or even be able to attend church or meetings again in person. As we begin to take the first steps in opening the VMH Gift Shop for VMH and Gundersen employees, we continue to be hopeful of the opportunity to resume volunteering again. Some of you may be excited and anticipate

## CHE Report (continued)

that and others may feel anxious or concerned. Please see the article below from our WHA Partners State CHE chair regarding COVID and Stress. I found the article very informative and helpful.

Please know that the staff at VMH is working closely to give guidance and direction to the volunteers working in the gift shop to assure the safety of the volunteers and patrons. The VMH

family misses your presence as do our patients and visitors. The vaccine has brought us an opportunity to develop the ability to return to normal activities. The recommendations from the CDC continue:

- \* Mask when in public settings and spaces,
- \* Maintain social distancing off 6 feet
- \* Wash hands frequently.
- \* If you are sick, stay home and avoid going

out in public.

- \* Be aware of the symptoms of COVID-19: Fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, muscle/body aches, new loss of sense of taste or smell

- \* Use community testing if symptomatic.

- \* Vaccines are available by contacting your health provider, or public health department

Please know we are close to being able to

come back together. Stay safe and well dear friends, cannot wait to see you all again hopefully soon.



Donna Nelson

## COVID 19 and Stress

Sue Schuelke, State CHE Chair

The COVID-19 outbreak has compounded an already existing mental health crisis in our country, affecting individuals of all ages and walks of life. Increased stress levels are a result of social isolation, uncertainty, and the unknown which can cause fear and anxiety.

Individuals most likely to feel such stress during this health crisis are:

- Older people and those with chronic health conditions who are at higher risk for complications
- Children and teenagers- lack of activities and socialization with friends has led to loneliness and anxiety.
- Healthcare providers and first-responders having to deal with critical medical situations day after day.
- People with existing mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression.
- Individuals abusing drugs and alcohol as a means of coping.

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include fear or worry about one's own health and that of others. *Being able to cope with stress (in a healthy way) is essential for both physical and mental well-being. Some suggestions on how you can reduce feelings of stress include:*

1. Taking a break from the news whether it be reading the newspaper, watching TV, listening to the radio, social media.
2. Exercise and/or meditation; eating healthy meals; getting enough sleep; avoiding alcohol and drug use
3. Keeping busy with at-home hobbies such as reading, sewing, knitting, crafts, puzzles and board games.
4. Outdoor activities, such as taking a walk or biking; gardening.
5. Staying connected with others through a phone call or using virtual technology such as FaceTime, Skype, or Zoom.

If stress is disrupting your activities of daily living for days in a row, contact your health care provider. When

you care for yourself, you are better able to care for others.

May is National Mental Health Awareness month, signified by the color green. Wearing a green ribbon during the month of May helps show your support in letting individuals with mental health issues know you care.

2021-2022 Friends of VMH Calendar of Events  
pending approval from VMH Administration

April 1, 2021 – no Spring Craft Show/Bake Sale – pandemic restrictions

April 12, 2021 – no meeting – pandemic restrictions

April 14, 2021 – Advocacy Day – virtual meeting 8:30-11:30

April 15 & 16, 2021 - Nutman Sale – hospital lobby in front of gift shop

April 15, 2021 - Gift Shop re-opens 11-1 Monday thru Thursday

May 7, 2021 – no Geranium Sale, supplier unable to accomodate on short notice

May 10, 2021 – no meeting – pandemic restrictions

May 20, 2021 - Spring Western District virtual meeting 9:00-11:30

June 24, 2021 - no Taco Luncheon

August 12, 2021 – Mum Sale pre-orders begin, need help from VMH Marketng

August 26, 2021 – Brat Sale - Hospital parking lot 11:30-1:30 ?????

September 13, 2021 - Annual Membership Luncheon – MOB Conf. Cntr. Noon

September 20, 2021 – Mum Order Pick up – hospital parking lot 8-noon

October 5-7, 2021 Partners WHA in-person state convention – Madison

October 11, 2021 Friends monthly meeting and new officer installation

MOB Conf. Cntr. Lunch 11:30, Meeting 12 Noon

November 6, 2021 – Fireside Theatre Bus Trip sponsored by Friends of VMH ?????

November 7 & 8, 2021 - Nutman Sale – hospital lobby in front of gift shop

November 8, 2021 Friends monthly meeting MOB Conf. Cntr. Lunch 11:30, Meeting Noon

November 19 - Lovelights Virtual Kick-off, work with VMH Marketing Dept.

December 2, 2021 Holiday Craft Show and Bake Sale, MOB Conference Center 8:30-2:30 ?????

January 10, 2022 - monthly meeting MOB Conf. Cntr. – Lunch 11:30 Meeting at Noon

January 20, 2022 Spud Bowl, (baked potato lunch) 11-1:30 MOB Conf. Cntr. ???????

February 14, 2022 – Prepare Cookie trays for staff appreciation 8:00 - noon ??????

March 14, 2022 - meeting MOB Conf. Cntr. – Lunch 11:30 Meeting at Noon

April 7, 2022 – Spring Craft Show and Bake Sale 8:30-2:30 ??????