

Hello Partners With Our Lady of Victory Hospital!

It definitely looks and feels like fall is here! It’s been a pretty nice fall so far and hope it stays a little while longer, weather wise.

**We will be having a face-to-face membership meeting on Tuesday, November 9, 2:00 pm at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church. This is a very important meeting because we will be talking about what I have learned from our new hospital head, Dale Hustedt about Partners With OLVH. We will need to make some changes with our corporation and By-Laws. We will need as many members present as possible.**

I also attended the virtual state convention and virtual West Central District Fall Meeting and will have some info for anyone to look at after the meeting.

We are in the process of getting our Love Lights going, a little later than usual due to the hospital transition that is still in the works. I’ve included a page with Love Light forms for you to fill out and send to the hospital. **Please be sure to MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Partners With OLVH. If any checks are made payable to the hospital or something else, we will have to return the check to you and ask that you send us a new check. We are not able to cash any check not made out to Partners With OLVH!**

Flyers and forms will be out as soon as we can get them done. There will be one form in the Stanley Republican the first week in December. Please support Partners With OLVH and purchase some Love Lights in memory or honor of your loved one, pets, and/or service men and women, and anyone you consider a COVID hero.

I am currently trying to get some volunteer opportunities that we may be able to do as soon as volunteers can come back to the hospital. We did start this before COVID, but now need to restart, so if you are interested in volunteering in the hospital, once a week, or even once a month, please let me know at the meeting so I can get a list of those interested. This will help us to determine what kind of volunteer opportunities we may be able to help the hospital with. There may be more info on this at the meeting.

 Mark your calendar to attend the membership meeting on Tuesday afternoon, November 9 at 2:00 pm at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church.

Donella Christianson

**NEWS FROM “REACHING OUT”, PARTNERS OF WHA’S MAY NEWSLETTER 2021**

**A Message from the Partners of WHA President** - **Convention was Doable**

Thank you to everyone who was able to participate in the convention! While we all would have preferred to be together in person, it was great to see faces and to get to talk to each other. Our speakers were excellent. They brought great information for us to use every day. The CEO Panel was exceptional as always. It was so nice to celebrate all of our award recipients.

Thank you especially to Convention Chair Terri Donlin and WHA Liaison Leigh Ann Larson who collaborated to convert our in-person plans to a virtual format in 31 days. Instead of having attendees use separate links to log in again, we were able to use a new breakout feature of Microsoft Teams for the workshops.

I would like to mention the cost associated with the cancellation of the in-person venue. Standard meeting contracts include a cancellation penalty so the venue has confidence in their revenue stream when contracting workers and purchasing supplies. The Madison Marriott West has very graciously agreed to replace the contract for convention this fall with contracts for our spring board meeting at the end of February and for an event May 3-5. Those contracts cut our liability by more than half.

We need your help to determine what that event will look like. At our convention, we missed the vendors, displays, silent auction, and raffles. Some of our workshops would not work as well in the virtual space. Shopping for your gift shop/kiosk is not the same in a virtual space as in person. On the other hand, a virtual component of whatever we plan may help individuals feel comfortable participating. If you have ideas for the components of this event, please let Peg Larson or Terri Donlin know what information and format you would participate in. If you are willing to help with the development or execution of the event, Terri will be delighted to have your assistance.

Thank you for your continued participation and support of Partners of WHA. May you stay well.

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

**A Message from the President-Elect** – **Successful Convention**

Writing this article on a beautiful October day, two days removed from our 2021 convention, I’m still in awe at what appeared to be an insurmountable and extremely overwhelming task, literally 33 plus days prior, transitioned into an amazingly successful convention for our Partners organization. Thank you to all the Partners and DVS attendees, speakers, CEO panelists, workshop presenters, award recipients, and most especially, Terri Donlin, convention chair and Leigh Ann Larson, Partners of WHA liaison. It was wonderful to see you during convention and really reenergized my commitment to Partners of WHA.

Navigating through the challenges and changes of the past 18 plus months has called upon every organization’s creativity, determination, and resilience as they seek a “new” normal to move forward and maintain communication with their members. Virtuality has become the new mode of being together as well as conducting fundraising events and meetings at both the local and district levels. While many local organizations have been given the “cautious green light” to resume in-house volunteer activities, many remain inactive. Not to be deterred, in-home Partners projects have seen a tremendous uptick, drive-throughrecognitions and fundraisers have been enormously successful, and the willfulness spirit of volunteers with vitality, viability, and virtuality continue to maintain the legacy of our Partners of WHA organization.

Traditionally, by-laws updates are presented during convention. It seems prudent that a “pause” has been given for 2021. Over the winter months, work will resume. An interesting topic for reinstating “at large member” will be reviewed.

GENTLE REMINDER - Honor Points will be awarded during Spring Tour 2022. Please visit the Partners website for the new form. Completed forms are due MARCH 1 to the state president-elect.

Partners is a unique group of individuals serving their health care facilities and communities with their gifts of time and talent. Let us continue to CELEBRATE the creativity, tenaciousness, and opportunities that Partners of WHA provides.

In closing, I realize in a matter of six weeks the traditional start of the holidays will be upon us. May I extend my personal blessings that your celebrations will be joyful, full of many blessings, and healthy. Sharon Scott 262-334-6296 (H); 262-707-3259 (C); Email: dick-sharon-scott@prodigy.net

**Community Health Education Report**

With autumn comes colorful trees, apples, pumpkins, and…the seasonal flu. Yes, it is here and has the potential to make matters worse with the coronavirus still present, creating what is being termed a “twin-demic.” Getting vaccinated for the seasonal flu is the key to reducing the risk of severe illness this winter. It is safe to receive the seasonal flu vaccine at the same time you receive a COVID-19 vaccine or booster dose.

This quarter, Series 2 of Infectious Diseases will cover Pneumonia and Meningitis. Both can occur as viral or bacterial illnesses. Specific information will be posted on the Partners of WHA website, under the Health Education tab.

The CHE Special Interest Meeting during the Partners of WHA Convention was held virtually this year and well attended. An update regarding the COVID-19 pandemic was shared along with how we can improve or maintain our immunity to infectious disease, and what topics on infectious diseases will be covered in the upcoming months. Some attendees shared how the COVID -19 crisis continues to impact their volunteer work, many still having activities on hold. Vaccine mandates have been put in place to include a large number of health care volunteers.

As we get close to the end of 2021, let’s hope there is good news to show the COVID-19 pandemic will be behind us soon and we can look forward to a new year with less fear and uncertainty!

Wishing you happy, healthy holidays ahead!

Sue Schuelke, CHE Chair 414-630-1183; Email: sschuelk@charter.net

**Public Policy Education Report**

The CEO Panel discussions from past conventions have continually offered important insight to the workings of our health care system, particularly in Wisconsin. This year’s panel was no exception as each panelist thoughtfully responded to questions submitted by our volunteer members. In this article, I have attempted to capture the essence of a number of those responses. WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding started off with a brief summary of the results from some of his 20 hospital visits during the pandemic. He stated, “I was heartened by the quality of our hospital leaders and the importance of the public policy role, the calm, cool poised responses made in the face of COVID.”

**Question:** Staffing for COVID admissions has been a challenge; how were you able to staff for the “normal” medical services, and have you experienced retirements from the nursing population?”

**Responses:** Cross-trained for supportive work streams, created four-hour extra shifts, carved back some surgical procedures, shared gratitude throughout staffing cycle with support of front-line first, transfer of patients to free up needed COVID beds, evidence of flexibility in professional staff in delaying retirement, meeting the challenge of clinical staff going to agencies for more money and less stress—a major concern, evolution of staffing agencies, “a Cannibalistic Circle” of hiring back trained professional staff services to hospitals at twice the cost of normal wages, the challenge of non-professional support staff hired by retail firms for $40 per hour, second shifts, some movement of nurses to ambulatory setting, and the anxiety of “when will it end?” has created a wave of professionals going to other health-care services or leaving the profession entirely without a pipeline of younger nurses entering the career.

1. **Question:** What can be done to expand the population of a diminishing professional resource of qualified nursing professionals?

**Responses:** There is a need to inform and educate those in high schools and career academies about nursing as a “calling,” and highlight this critical career. In times past, the “Sisters” created a Mission Motivated Message in their schools, need to create career tracts, and offer tuition reimbursement. Importantly, there has been a decreased number of educators in this profession, resulting in over 500 qualified nursing candidates in Wisconsin turned away from health care education in the last few years.

1. **Question:** During the pandemic, has your leadership style changed, and if so how? What didn’t change?

**Responses:** For each panelist, the concept of “Power of Presence, the Relational Person,” was shared. Many of the “management team” became those who cleaned the ER rooms, leading by example took on a more intense and sustainable definition and the example of the “servant leader” to the organization.

1. **Question:** The Partners organization of dedicated volunteers is waiting, somewhat impatiently to return to their in-hospital duties. How do you see that picture developing, and possible limitations of involvement?

**Responses:** “Direct volunteer involvement reinforces the purpose and fulfillment of the work I do,” stated Eric Borgerding. “The safety for those volunteers returning is the key. There will likely be more emphasis on identifying and meeting community needs with emphasis on a safe environment, i.e.: the sewing of volumes of masks by volunteer groups; upon returning volunteers will be met with a feeling of gratefulness by the entire hospital culture.”

Bill McCullough, PPE Chair 715-832-7053; Email: webirish2gmail.com

**Around the State**

**Oconomowoc Auxiliary and Volunteer Services, Oconomowoc:** A food drive, in partnership with Fleet Farm, was held and proved to be a huge success. They donated food to the Oconomowoc Food Pantry. Kwik Trip generously donated $200 in cash to be used to buy items. On May 6, baskets filled with snacks and treats were delivered for National Nurses Week. Also, another 24 Veteran Baskets were donated to their local VFW. Good job in helping your community!

**Aspirus Volunteers, Wausau:** In August, four ladies and their four male caddies golfed in the annual Aspirus Golf Classic in Wausau. All teams dressed themselves and their carts up. The proceeds this year went to Reach Out and Read, mammograms and breast health-related diagnostic services for women and men with cost concerns, and The Aspirus Family House for those who must travel to Wausau for specialty care and who need a safe and affordable place to stay. Another wonderful way to support your community!

**Ripon Medical Center Auxiliary, Ripon:** Volunteer sewers make walker bags, wheelchair bags, catheter bags, mastectomy pillows, fidget quilts, and fidget sleeves. Donations of yarn and fabric are always needed! Also, a new gift shop item is available – a facemask/ eyeglasses lanyard. These lovely and trendy beaded lanyards are a comfortable and convenient way to keep your facemask handy, or you can use it to keep your glasses close at hand. - Kay Lyndahl, Editor Email: kaylyndahl@gmail.com

