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Fall 2016 Newsletter

***Message from the Northwestern District Chair* Ginny Bosse – Flambeau Hospital Auxiliary, Park Falls**

Fall is just around the corner, and with it come two big events for our Partner groups around the state. The first is the Partners of WHA state convention, which will be held Tuesday at 1:00 PM through Thursday noon, October 4-6th at the Radisson Paper Valley Hotel in Appleton, WI. As always there will be informative and inspirational speakers and workshops. I hope each of our seven Northwestern District groups is sending some of its members. Remember that your group receives 5 Honor Points for each of the two voting delegates every group is allowed and two Honor Points for setting up a display. Honor Point Awards for 2015 will be given out at the convention. The registration materials everyone received state that the registration deadline is September 5th, and the deadline for hotel reservations is September 12th. The District Chairs received an email from Partners’ president Bonnie Olson stating that there is no on-line registration, and that the registration form has to be printed, filled out, and mailed to Patsy Pippin at the address on the form. She added that **there will be no late fee or penalty for registrations that arrive after the deadline!** However, I’m guessing that the hotel reservation deadline for the Partners rate most likely remains the same! The variety of speakers and workshops, as well as special events and the western theme of “Kick Up Your Heels for Volunteers” are sure to educate us and provide for a good time! Remember your denims, and cowboy boots and hats, if you have them!

Two weeks later, on Wednesday, October 19th, Hayward Hospital Auxiliary will host the fall Northwestern District meeting at The Steakhouse in Hayward. Mark your calendars now, and details will be coming later, directly from the Hayward Hospital Auxiliary.

***News from around the Northwestern District***

**Judy Lyons – St. Mary’s Hospital Auxiliary, Superior**

Greetings on behalf of the St. Mary’s Auxiliary, Superior! We are currently in the process of a little reorganization, since I will be moving down-state shortly. It is a sad thing for me, as well as a good thing. I know the Auxiliary will carry on the fine work they have done for so long. We are looking forward to this fall and the district meeting and seeing all of you. Rose Reijo, my vice president will handle affairs for the rest of the year. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the support I have received from the auxilians and my district friends. Keep up the good and valuable work that you do. And perhaps our paths will cross again. I hope so! Judy Lyons

A note from Ginny: Judy’s resignation from the District Chair-Elect position leaves the position open. Please consider stepping into that role. The state Partners group, and I, will make it as easy as we can to help you know what to do and also help you do it. I can say from experience, that there really isn’t that much to it. The St. Mary’s – Superior Auxiliary is in the process of reorganizing their leadership. When I know who the new leadership team is, I will send the update to all the Northwestern District presidents.

**Betty Harnish – Partners of Memorial Medical Center, Ashland**

The Northwest Cancer Center was officially opened on May 2, 2016. Patients are so pleased with the artwork in the center. The work of four local artists was used in the center. The funding was adequate to have artwork in every room, including restrooms.

There are windows to the outside in every one of the infusion rooms. The landscaping is in final stages, so by next spring the views should be of wonderful natural plants and trees.

On August 17, President Linda Fish and Membership Chair Merry Nuutinen represented Partners of MMC at the *55+ Health Expo* sponsored in part by Memorial Medical Center. They talked with potential volunteers and the hope is that there are several who will become active.

**Ginny Bosse – Flambeau Hospital Auxiliary, Park Falls**

After the FHA Scholarship Committee members each spent 4½ hours scoring fourteen scholarship applications in order to determine the winners of six $1000 scholarships, seventh place was *one-tenth of a point* lower than sixth place! After a telephone survey of all the FHA Board members, the decision was unanimous to award seven $1000 scholarships this year! The well-deserving and grateful winners have already received their checks!

***Message from the Northwestern District PPE Chair* Betty Harnish – Partners of Memorial Medical Center, Ashland**

Opioid abuse is both a Community Health concern and a PPE issue.  The concern about opioids being available in communities is just not about prescribers, as 70% of those who started abusing opioids got them from a friend or relative.  A concern is having old or current prescriptions in households who are not taking care that they don't fall into the wrong hands.  I encourage you that, if your community has a take-back-type event, take advantage of it and bring in your old medications.  Last year, the state take-back event took in 62,618 pounds of drugs.  My local newspaper reported that in our clean-sweep event 2 years ago our general area took in enough drugs to fill two 55 gallon barrels.  There is a concern that as opioids become less available those who abuse will turn to heroin as an alternative.  The problem is huge!  In 2013 The Institute for Health estimated that 163,000 people in WI abused opioids.  Our state Attorney General Brad Schimel is working to reduce the use of opioids.  He states that the state medical community has been "a strong partner" with him in reducing this abuse.  Treatment services are in place for those who need it, and they are helping to enact new legislation phasing in use of a prescription drug monitoring program.  Our communities, medical communities, legislators and each of us need to work together to find a solution.  Opioids and heroin abuse has become as issue in this next election, please pay attention!    
(Sources:   The Valued Voice and local newspapers.)

***Message from the Northwestern District CHE Chair***  **Allison Posso – Partners of Spooner Health, Spooner**

Lung Cancer

This is sometimes a difficulty subject to talk about, but an urgently needed one. Lung Cancer is the #1 cancer killer of both women and men. Every five minutes, a woman in this country learns she has lung cancer. At present it remains a silent epidemic that is not even on women’s radar when they are asked. Lung Cancer kills almost twice as many women as any other cancer. It has doubled among all women in the past 35 years. The problem is that many people do not have symptoms until the disease is in later stages and treatment is not as effective. It is very important that this discussion happens with your health provider, especially if you have risk factors.

Dangerous, toxic substances put you at risk. Even if you were exposed many years ago, you are still at risk. These risks include: smoking or second hand smoke, radon, hazardous chemicals, particle pollution, and family history. It is important, if you have any of these risk factors, that you talk to you doctor even if you are not having symptoms. Early detection helps save lives. Only 17% are diagnosed early, when survival rate is much higher. Three and a half million people are at high risk with these risk factors.

Signs and symptoms: Cough that doesn't go away, chronic cough (smoker’s cough) , constant chest pain, shortness of breath and/or wheezing, frequent lung infections, and coughing up blood. Remember that signs and symptoms usually show up later in the process.

Awareness is so important for early detection and increased survival. Getting the information to others and increased funding for this health issue are imperative for more efficient ways to detect it early at a more treatable stage, more precise improved treatments, and overall increased research.

If you have any of these risk factors, please have the conversation with your physician. Contact your legislators about increasing funding for lung cancer research, due to the significance of this health crisis. Spread the word to people you know and care about. We need to make this an awareness issue just like breast cancer was. Once that happened, more money was put into research, treatment, and awareness. Breast cancer has had a decrease in deaths, an increase in early detection, and improved treatments. (Information from the American Lung Association)

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