

Partners of Memorial Medical Center

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June 5, 2020

SUMMER GREETINGS,

Just after the last newsletter was mailed, our lives had a major change. It has been a totally different way of living than any of us were accustomed to. We can feel very blessed that our area has not been hit by the COVID 19 virus as other areas have. Please be patient until Partners are given the go ahead to go back to doing the things we all love to do. Until that time comes, please remember that it is for our safety and wellbeing that we are not able to volunteer right now. You are each a blessing to our efforts and very valued. Please practice the well-known safety measures which include staying home for everyone's wellbeing.

You have all received word that we will not be able to have our June 17 dinner. You have my permission to be disappointed. I freely admit that I am disappointed. In an effort to have some type of a commemoration, Kate Deering of the Marketing and Communications office is putting together a slide show that will premiere on June 17. This was the date our celebratory dinner was to be held. This slide show would have been part of the evening. You will see pictures from the very beginning of our existence until today. You will be able to watch the slide show at <https://ashlandmmc.com/>. Click on "About Us" in the menu at the top of the page. Then scroll down to Partners tab. Kate was part to the 2020 Celebration Committee. She has been most helpful. Other members of the committee were Betty Harnisch, Joan Haukaas, Jeanne Hultman, Carole Huhn and Linda Fish .

You will find there is a small gift included with this newsletter. You would have received this gift at the dinner. I think this gift expresses very well the efforts of Partners for MMC. Many of those efforts also benefit the whole community. I hope you get a smile from this gift.

Please continue to follow all the safety protocols so you may stay healthy. I appreciate your patience at this time in addition to all you do.

Linda

Thrift Shop Reopening

The Thrift Shop will reopen on June 8. There will be limited hours in the beginning. Only 5 people will be allowed in the Shop at a time and shoppers must wear a mask. Hand Sanitizer we be available upon entering the Shop. At this time children 16 and under will not be allowed in the Shop. We are not accepting clothing donations however, we will take household donations. Please contact the Thrift Shop for a drop off time for any household donations. Please be patient as these precautions are for your safety as well as ours. Thank you, we look forward to seeing you.

FALL DISTRICT MEETING

The Fall District Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 23 in Ashland. The State Team will be joining us and election of officers will be held. We need to elect both a District Chair and a District Chair Elect. I will continue on in the Secretary-Treasurer role for another term. According to the Partners of WHA bylaws passed at the October 2019 convention, districts shall have at least three elected officers. The PPE and CHE are appointed positions so they do not count in the three.

CONVENTION CANCELED

The annual Partners of WHA convention has been canceled for this fall. The business meeting will be held virtually on Wednesday, October 7 to facilitate election of officers and any other business. If you would like to attend, please let me know.

The Northwest District is scheduled for September 23 here in Ashland. There will election of District Officers.

There will be more information for both events in the next newsletter.

SAYING GOOD BYE

On May 22, Partners lost a very valuable and much loved volunteer. Fran Zepczyk ended her earthly journey. Fran was on the Partners Board serving as Program Chair beginning in 2016 continuing through this year. She was a devoted and valued Gift Shop worker. In addition she volunteered for several other community organizations. Fran was much loved and will be very greatly missed by many area residents.

The Partners Board has given a memorial to the Howard V Sandin Healthcare Fellowship Fund in Fran's memory. Please keep her family in your prayers.

Life Member Ellenanne Tidstrom also left us on May 22. She had not been in good health for several years and was living near family in Minnesota. Please keep her family in your prayers also.

BUSINESS UPDATES

By now you are probably aware that the Linen Sale was cancelled. Second Grade Days were not held this year. The Nutman Sale is not going to happen in June. Another Nutman Sale is scheduled for October. I will keep you posted on whether it will happen or not. At this point it is hard to tell. In July or August letters will go out for our No Bake Sale. When I know whether or not the Cookie Walk can take place, I will let you know.

NEW BEGINNINGS

The new bylaws were accepted by the MMC board at their April meeting. Many thanks go to the committee Betty Harnisch, Ann Marie Johnson, Linda Fish. Jason Douglas and Kevin Stranberg were Administration members. Many thanks to the committee for their work and dedication. A special thank you to Jason Douglas for his willingness to help Partners make this change so the organization would continue. Kevin put time and thought into summarizing and clarifying what was discussed at committee meetings as well as amending the Bylaws. We are now set to move forward continuing our service to MMC.

Three CEOs' Thoughts on 50 years of Partners Service to MMC

In The Beginning--Thoughts from Lowell Miller, CEO MMC 1974 through 1992

During construction of MMC Lowell Miller would make his rounds to check on construction progress twice a day. He would greet the then Auxiliary members and express his appreciation for their efforts. He comment is "It was a natural thing." He was told by Auxiliary members that he was the only person to do that. He recalled that Auxiliary members were representing the community to MMC. He also stated that there was a precious relationship with the volunteers. "They were always there."

He says to this day "My heart is still with the organization. "

Congratulations From Dan Hymans, CEO MMC August 1992 through October 2013

Congratulations on achieving 50 years of service to the people and patients of the Chequamegon Bay area. One of the highlights of my years in hospital administration was working with the hospital volunteers. Whether you were a board member, a volunteer at the gift shop, coffee shop or thrift shop, or working on one of the many projects you all did for us on a regular basis, I could always tell you were interested in helping to maintain a strong, vibrant and respected hospital in your community. You were all important ambassadors for the hospital in all of the communities in the area. I encourage you to keep up your good work because with your efforts, MMC will continue to be a strong hospital in the greater northern Wisconsin area for many years to come.

Thoughts from Jason Douglas, CEO MMC, 2013-Present

"The volunteers of Partners of Memorial Medical Center have been a mainstay for us at MMC. Not only do they provide a great service to our staff and our patients, but their fundraising has provided much-needed equipment over the past 50 years. It is amazing to think a group of forward thinking leaders would form such a vital organization even before MMC opened its doors. Here we are a half-century later with Partners of MMC still providing support and a caring smile to our patients, our visitors and our staff. MMC would not be the thriving healthcare organization that we are without each and every one of our volunteers throughout the 50 years. You truly are an amazing part of our healthcare team."

From Jan Molaska, President Partners of WHA
PARTNERS OF WISCONSIN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION (WHA)
WHO WE ARE?
April, 2020

Many of you are probably under the assumption that your auxiliary or volunteer group is an entity in and of itself. Each local organization might do its own thing, but there is a much larger picture. Many local organizations belong to districts and the districts make up Partners of WHA – the state wide organization that represents healthcare volunteers from all over the state of WI.

I recently received this comment from a new member of a local board: "...it seems that the lack of knowledge of the "Partners" itself is a void. As I said, until I became involved in the Volunteer Board, I do not believe that I had heard what "Partners" was or even the existence of it. That void is huge."

Here is an overview of PARTNERS OF WHA.

First, a short history:

In 1951, the Board of Trustees of the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) appointed a committee of three women to study the need for a Wisconsin Hospital Association Auxiliaries Association (WHAA). During the year questionnaires were sent to all hospitals to ascertain the number of existing auxiliaries, the various projects and programs involving volunteers and which hospitals were considering starting such organizations. There were 81 replies. Of these, 43 auxiliaries reported programs and volunteer services. There were 16 requests for assistance, either in organizing or with some particular project.

In 1953, hospital association membership for auxiliaries became a reality, with membership limited to those auxiliaries whose hospitals qualified for membership in the state group (WHA).

In 1954, the Board of Trustees of WHA voted to accept WHAA as a committee within the framework of the WHA – a concept that would lay the foundation for the WHA/WHAA relationship that exists to this day.

In 1962, a Constitution and Bylaws for WHAA were compiled and voted into existence. Local auxiliaries began to actively promote health careers and sought aid and expertise from the parent organization -WHA. During the years to follow, WHAA became interested in legislative issues concerning the health care industry, and urged local auxiliaries to adopt the study of these issues as an integral part of ongoing programming. WHAA encouraged local auxiliaries to establish scholarships for students pursuing a career in health care.

1972 was marked by the development of the first leadership manual. Over the years, WHAA has grown and developed into a strong service organization and maintains an active liaison with WHA with which it shares common goals.

In 1983, the membership of WHAA voted to become a non-profit corporation to be subsequently referred to as the Wisconsin Hospital Association Auxiliaries, Incorporated (WHAAI).

In March 1996, in an effort to reflect the ever-changing, broad based needs of state wide health care providers, name changes for the organizations occurred. WHA became Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association. In 2002, the name was changed back to WHA. In 2003, Wisconsin Hospital Association Auxiliaries, Inc. changed its name to Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc. (Partners of WHA, Inc.) which remains the name to this day.

Since 1993 Partners of WHA have instituted three awards.

*In 1993, the Honor Points Award was first presented. This award is presented each year at the annual convention to organizations that fulfill specific requirements.

*In 1994, the Best of the Best Award was begun. This award is presented each year to an onsite administrator, who has demonstrated exemplary support of the local Partners volunteers in their facility.

*In 2003, the WAVE awards, "Wisconsin Award for Volunteer Excellence" were presented for the first time. There are four categories: Community Service, Fundraising, In-Service and Community Outreach and/or Collaboration.

Present day:

Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc. is a non-profit, state wide volunteer service organization representing over 8500 hospital volunteers, of which the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) is a strong supporter.

The President of the Board moves into the Presidency following two years as President-Elect. A President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer are elected biennially by the voting delegates at the state convention. The state Partners Board is composed of the four officers, the seven District Chair, chairpersons for the following committees: Community Health Education, Public Policy Education, Strategic Planning, and Bylaws, the Immediate Past President, a Parliamentarian, and additional committee members appointed by the President. Partners is governed by a set of Bylaws which have been adopted by and can be amended by a vote of voting delegates at the annual meeting. Every two years, the Board adopts a health issue to focus on. This becomes the project of the Community Health Education (CHE) Chair to research and provide information and resources to the district and local CHE representatives. The Public Policy Education (PPE) Chair works with WHA personnel to keep everyone informed on legislative issues that affect healthcare.

The statewide Partners of WHA organization is divided into 7 districts. The districts and the number of local hospitals they represent include: Lakes (9 hospitals), North Central (10 hospitals), Northwestern, (6 hospitals), Southeastern (7 hospitals), Southern (7 hospitals), West Central (6 hospitals) and Western (9 hospitals.) Local organizations operate by the policies that their members establish.

Each district has a District Chair and a board consisting of a secretary, treasurer, Community Health Education Chair (CHE) and a Public Policy Education Chair (PPE). These District officers are elected by members of their district organizations. (Please check the PARTNERSOFWHA.ORG website to see a listing of all organizations).

District meetings are held in spring and fall. At the spring meeting, members of the state Board travel to each of the districts to participate in the meetings, listen to concerns and needs within the districts and share information and ideas on what is happening around the state. These meetings provide the opportunity to network with other volunteers, share ideas, and receive updates on health concerns and issues at the local, state and federal level.

In 2019 alone, 56 Member Organizations, representing 8550 volunteers donated 894,104.55 hours to their respective hospitals and communities. Money donated back to hospitals totaled \$1,706,170.79 in 2019 and 339 scholarships amounting to \$371,125.00 were awarded.

Advocacy is a critical element of the work of Partners. Partners' advocacy is grounded in the belief that people matter and their collective voices are powerful in shaping the future of health care. A tremendous number of Partners members show up yearly at WHA's and visit with their state legislators. WHA's Hospitals Education and Advocacy Team (HEAT) helps members communicate with local, state and federal legislators on legislative issues that impact our hospitals, our clinics, and the well-being of all people.

A statewide convention is held yearly to bring members of all Partners groups together for educational workshops, to hear from a panel of legislators and hospital administrators on current health care issues, to acknowledge and celebrate award winners and share information and network to share information with other volunteers from across the state.

From this snapshot, it is easy to recognize the long and important history of Partners of Wisconsin Hospitals. Our members continue to greatly impact their local hospitals, communities and at the state and federal levels. We have accomplished a great deal over the past 66 years but there is much more to be done to assure that quality healthcare continues.

An organization is only as strong as it's leadership. It is imperative that individuals take on leadership roles within their local, district and state organizations.

As mentioned earlier, please share this information with all members, hospital administrators, director of volunteer services and community members, so that the mission of Partners is known and celebrated. For additional information please feel free to contact me: jmolaska@gmail.com.

With gratitude to all,

Jan Molaska
President
Partners of WHA

Local Footnote: Partners of MMC and its predecessor has had representation at the state level. There were four consecutive Partners of WHA treasurers from Ashland. The late Barbara Bretting served from 1991-1994, Barb Barry served from 1995-1998, Linda Fish served from 1999-2002 and Cindy Laymon was Partners of WHA treasurer in 2003 and 2004. In 2003 Linda Fish was elected as President Elect and was the Partners of WHA president in 2005 and 2006. Even though Linda was elected to the Partners of WHA treasurer as a member of Partners of MMC she moved before she actually began serving the term and was a member of the Wausau organization through most of her time of the Partner of WHA board. She had moved to Prescott in 2006 and served her Past President term residing there. Part of that time she remained a member of the Wausau organization and part of that term, she renewed her membership with Partners of MMC. All of the above mentioned ladies were also elected District Chairs. There were several others who served earlier but that history is in the Partners office and not available to me at this time.