

*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 the Partners of WHA President

### Together Again!



Peg Larson

After three long years, it was WONDERFUL to be together in the Dells. Our future is bright with many new leaders. I am so glad that 38 organizations were able to commit the resources to have 140 leaders come to network and learn. While being together online was better than nothing, being together in person is the gold standard. As we moved through the last two years, we learned new skills and methods of communication. As we

navigate into the future, may we continue using all opportunities to connect with others!

Our keynote speaker discussed the different personality characteristics people may exhibit. It was interesting to think about the ways those traits might affect our interactions. Are we welcoming to those whose characteristics are opposite (or the same) as ours? It would be a boring world without the differences. Good leaders find ways to use each person's strengths for the benefit of the organization.

Our CEO panelists and Best of the Best recipient gave great affirmations to the importance of volunteers in the morale of their staffs and patients. The WAVE recipients gave us great examples of ways that volunteers make a difference every day. Each of you make a difference through your presence.

Throughout my time on the board and especially during my presidency, we have had spectacular support from the Wisconsin Hospital Association. I neglected to recognize Leigh Ann Larson, our liaison, and her staff for printing and collating the documents for 150 convention folders. You are all amazing and fabulously helpful. Thank you!

My Convention Report includes recognition of many individuals. I am eternally grateful to have had the opportunity to work with an amazing group of volunteers. I hope that I have lived up to the beautiful wall art "Leadership is about making others better as a result of your presence and making sure that impact lasts in your absence." You have each touched my heart with your helping hands. Thank you for sharing your talents with the Partners of WHA.

Peg Larson; 920-231-3005 (H); Email: [pegvoluntr@hotmail.com](mailto:pegvoluntr@hotmail.com)

## A Message from the President-Elect

### Greetings, Partners

What a fabulous convention. Thank you, Convention Co-Chairs Iva Mulhern and Patsy Pippin and the entire Western District for planning this terrific event! It was so wonderful to re-connect with



Sharon Scott

familiar faces, meet first time attendees and yes, miss those unable to attend. The Chula Vista Resort and Convention Center venue and its staff provided a most pleasing experience. The convention committee arranged outstanding keynote and closing speakers, an exceptional CEO panel, and 11 informative workshops—a huge task well done! Mark your calendars for the 2023 convention, October 3-5 at the Steven's Point Holiday Inn and Convention Center. Convention Chair Betty Oddo and the entire West Central District are already in the throes of planning another fabulous Partners of WHA convention.

Updates from the By-Laws Committee were shared during the general membership meeting of the convention. Three issues were discussed:

1. Adding a provision to allow for a contracted Parliamentarian to section 7. We hope to bring a proposal to amend the bylaws to the 2023 general membership meeting.
2. Significant discussion was held regarding re-instituting a by-law that specifically defines member-at-large

(Continued on page 2)

***A Message from the President-Elect...cont'd. from page 1***

membership. Approximately 10 years ago the by-law was removed with the rationale it was an irrelevant issue. This discussion will take substantial time to ensure language and action is inclusive of all needs of the organization.

3. A brief discussion was held regarding estimated hours for those serving in leadership roles. The committee agreed to table this item.

The opportunity to present Honor Point recognition certificates to 23 organizations was so indicative of Partners' abilities to move forward despite limitations on activities. The Executive Committee adjusted the required point count to 34 for 2021, realizing the efforts of organizations during a time of uncertainty needed to be acknowledged.

The past two years, it has been my honor serving as your president-elect. Undoubtedly, I fully expected a journey of challenges and changes—BUT, never in a MILLION years did I imagine we would endure such a heart-wrenching and arduous time. Each of us learned how strong our own personal “mettle” could be, grasping the opportunity to become “virtually literate” while displaying spirit and strength to maintain the viability of our organizations. I have been privileged to witness perseverance, tenacity, and resolve; all adjectives that describe the Partners of WHA!

At this point, I would like to offer my personal congratulations to the newly elected and installed Partner's officers, President-Elect Patsy Pippin; State Secretary Iva Mulhern; and State Treasurer John Tully. All bring a special skill set which will enable our organization to move forward.

In closing, thank you Partners of WHA for your support and trust in me as I assume the duties of state president. I feel extremely honored. I am looking forward to the challenges and changes that may be presented and know with certainty, together we will continue to move Partners of WHA forward.

AND on one final note, in just a few short weeks we will begin the holiday season. May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a happy Thanksgiving, a very merry and blessed Christmas, and a most joyous and prosperous New Year.

*Sharon Scott*

262-334-6296 (H); 262-707-3159 (C)

Email: [Dick-sharon-scott@prodiqy.net](mailto:Dick-sharon-scott@prodiqy.net)

## Oh Brother!

Winnie the Pooh is one of my favorite characters and has some of the best beliefs.

Winnie says: “How lucky am I to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.” This statement never rang truer for me than Wednesday night at the 2022 convention.

In 2020, I turned the gavel over to the very competent Peg Larson, who has led us through some very difficult times. The 2022 convention was about saying thank you to Peg and welcoming Sharon Scott, the incoming president. I was never more surprised than when Peg called me up to the front and acknowledged the work I had done. Peg was extremely kind in pointing out some of the concerns we had addressed and successfully completed. However, it is very important to realize, any accomplishments were TEAM efforts. It was because of the dedicated, persistent, and conscientious board members that we were able to complete the tasks we had undertaken.

I was dumbfounded during the celebration and not even sure what I said. I do know I love being “the cookie” to Yo Voigt’s “milk.” The celebration was totally unexpected, but I will treasure the memory forever. I also want to thank all the members of Partners for putting your trust in me and for the privilege of representing the Partners organization.

I have truly enjoyed and learned so very much during my term. Thank you for your friendships and support. The friendships I have made are the most precious gifts that I received serving in this role.

In closing, Eeyore said, “A little consideration, a little thought for others, makes all the difference.” A sincere thank you to everyone for making a difference every day.

With heartfelt gratitude and blessings,

*Jan Molaska*

*Partners of WHA Immediate Past President*

Email: [jmolaska@gmail.com](mailto:jmolaska@gmail.com)



*Jan Molaska*

### Don't Wait

Don't wait for things to get easier, simpler, or better.

Life will always be complicated.

Learn to be happy now.

Otherwise, you'll run out of time.

## Strategic Planning Committee Looks Toward a Strong Future for Partners

The Partners Strategic Planning Committee members began working together in January 2021, in the middle of a pandemic, a situation that mandated virtual meetings. During this time members developed goals and decided on specific projects that continued leadership development, furthered communication among volunteers at all levels of our Partners organization and continued to communicate the value of membership in Partners.



Sherry Jelic

### Goal #1 - Improve communication among volunteers at all levels of Partners.

- A process was developed ensuring that volunteers holding positions on local, district, or state boards receive the *Reaching Out* newsletter. If you should be receiving the newsletter and are not, contact Patricia Franks, website coordinator, at [pfranks1974@gmail.com](mailto:pfranks1974@gmail.com).
- A Volunteer Interest Form for new volunteers was developed to be used at the district level. A process to collect data was also created and posted on the [forms page](#) of the Partners website. The original implementation plan was to introduce the form at 2021 fall district meetings and Partners State Convention. The pandemic did not allow in-person gatherings so talk about the form was through a virtual format. To-date, no forms have been submitted. We are hoping that when volunteer groups are meeting in person and at district meetings, the form will be introduced and used.
- To enhance communication about the value of Partners to local organizations, a new [volunteer orientation form](#) listing advantages of Partners was developed and added to the Partners website. The plan is for those involved in new volunteer orientations to include this form in the orientation process. A document explaining its purpose was developed and emailed to all directors of volunteers.
- A [PAGE icon](#) was added to the Partner's website next to each district. Information pertinent to that group may be added, such as dates and hosts for spring and fall district meetings; a summary of district meetings; district officer information; bylaws; nominating committee schedules; or convention basket rotation among local organizations. We hope it will be an effective communication tool between district and local volunteers.

### Goal #2 - Communicate the value of membership in Partners

- This was done through a virtual "table" set up on the Advocacy Day Leader Pass platform in 2021 and 2022. This included text and a video explaining the benefits/value of belonging to Partners of WHA. The video will also be available on the Partners website.

### Goal #3 - Further development and implementation of the leadership tool kit.

- The mentor list was updated, a personal phone call was completed to each person on the list in 2021 and again in January 2022. A letter summarizing the purpose and procedure for matching mentor/mentee was emailed to each new district chair and to each mentor, along with a Contact Summary Form to track mentor/mentee contacts. There has been positive feedback from mentors, but with an almost equal number of responses being "the inability for us to meet has tended to make members feel less engaged in our mission." Observations by Bill McCullough were, "Over the last few years the COVID Pandemic has impacted the way we have had to communicate. I feel some limited success has been achieved in this part of our Strategic Plan. A commitment to review the elements of communication and process are necessary."
- "Review all forms to keep information current" was added to the job description of the past president.
- Also discussed as part of this goal were options to improve the safety and comfort of participants attending meetings or other gatherings. Protocols will be followed according to the local guidelines in place at the time of the event or the current CDC recommendations.

A huge thank you and appreciation to our committee members – Peg Larson, Sharon Scott, Julie Steiner, John Tully, Bill McCullough, Sue Schuelke, Judy Jaggard, Patsy Pippin, and Leigh Ann Larson.

Before our team ends its two-year term, we continue to look toward Partners' future. The pandemic may be our wake-up call in realizing that we are all connected. We cannot be passive about our health and that of our communities. We do not like to be isolated. We support our community health facilities. We like to serve and have a purpose. We want to make new friends and build relationships. We want connections. We feel it—volunteering is good for our physical and mental well-being!

(Continued on page 10)

## Everyone Needs a Reboot



*Leigh Ann Larson*

Most people look at spring or summer as a time to reboot or energize for the months ahead. For me, that time is fall. The changing of the leaves, the chill in the air, and the fall harvest

are some of the things that make this time of year my favorite. Well, that and Halloween season. I was raised on scary movies and at any given time leading up to October 31, you will find them on in my house.

Whether it be spring, summer or fall, everyone needs time to reboot. In addition to the fall season, I found that the recent Partners of WHA convention was an opportunity to energize and focus on the months ahead. Meeting in person is something we all have been looking forward to. With it being the first time in three years, it was overdue and much appreciated. It was a time to remind ourselves of why we all do the work that we do. In the day-to-day stress and detail of accomplishing tasks, it is easy to forget the overall purpose. I am guilty of this. Occasionally, I need something, like the Partners convention, to put myself back on track. I thank you all for the opportunity to participate in the convention and to be your WHA liaison.

I look forward to the remaining months of the year and what the new year will have in store for us all. I wish you all a happy fall.

For those of you who have asked, my trip to Red Lodge, Montana in August was, simply put, magical. It was the experience of a lifetime and the memories I have will last forever.

*Leigh Ann S. Larson*  
 WHA Vice President of Education and Marketing; Executive Director of the WHA Foundation; Partners of WHA Liaison  
 Email: [llarson@wha.org](mailto:llarson@wha.org)



*Partners Board Members gathered for the Fall Board Meeting October 10 and 11, 2022.*

## Hugging

### Hugging is healthy:

It helps the body's immune system, it keeps you healthier, it cures depression, it reduces stress, it induces sleep, it's invigorating, it's rejuvenating, it has no unpleasant side effects, and hugging is nothing less than a miracle drug.

### Hugging is all natural:

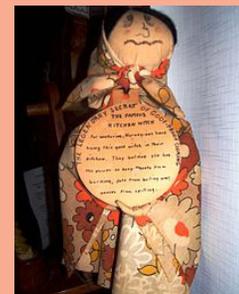
It is organic, naturally sweet, no pesticides, no preservatives, no artificial ingredients, and 100 percent wholesome.

### Hugging is practically perfect:

There are no movable parts, no batteries to wear out, no periodic checkups, low energy consumption, high energy yield, inflation proof, non-fattening, no monthly payments, no insurance requirements, theft-proof, non-taxable, non-polluting, and of course, fully returnable.

## The Kitchen Witch

She was hung in colonial kitchens to ward off evil spirits, help bake pies tender, help cakes rise, and to ensure family love.



## Convention 2022 Wrap-up

Partners Convention 2022 was held October 11-13 at the Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells. It was great to be back in person and renew the friendships we have missed. The Theme “Volunteers, Helping Hands, Touching Hearts” was carried throughout. Our keynote speaker, Neil Ihde, was wonderfully uplifting. There were many terrific workshops. The vendors, hospital displays, raffle, and silent auction, were again popular stops. The CEO Panel gave us all interesting perspectives on issues our hospitals are facing. Heather Whittaker, our closing speaker, sent us on our way with a joyful message.

The Wisconsin Awards for Volunteer Excellence (WAVE) were presented, as was the Best of the Best Award. The election and installation of officers was held with Sharon Scott as president; Patsy Pippin, president-elect; John Tully, treasurer; and Iva Mulhern, secretary. Jan Molaska and Peg Larson were honored as outgoing presidents. Betty Oddo invited everyone to Convention 2023, October 3-5 in Stevens Point.

A huge thank you to the local organizations of the Western District for their work preparing for Convention 2022.



2022 Convention Co-chairs Iva Mulhern and Patsy Pippin



President Peg Larson was presented with a thank you gift by President-Elect Sharon Scott on behalf of the Board of Directors



The “Chula Vista” choir closed out the convention with “Go Make a Difference”



Aaron Carpiaux, MD, and Brandon Barber, Physical Therapist, from SSM Health St. Clare Hospital-Baraboo discuss the causes, symptoms and treatment options for joint pain.



The silent auction, raffle committee



Partners join Wendy Molaska, M.D. in a workshop session covering end of life hard questions.



Convention Closing Speaker, Heather Whittaker

*Convention 2022 Wrap-up...continued from page 5*



*The pandemic and its effect on behavioral and mental health was presented by Connor Tiggerus, Psychotherapist at Therapy Without Walls - Reedsburg*



*Thorne Wittstruck from SSM Health-Wisconsin Dells and Nicole Faust from SSM Health-Baraboo provide a heart healthy workshop on how to reduce the risks of cardiovascular disease.*

## Kyle Nondorf Awarded 2022 Best of the Best Administrative Award

Kyle Nondorf, president of SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital-Madison and interim president at SSM Health St. Clare Hospital-Baraboo, received Partners of WHA's 2022 Best of the Best Administrative Award. The award was presented to Nondorf at the Partners of WHA Convention October 12 in Wisconsin Dells.

The award recognizes an on-site hospital executive who demonstrates a cooperative, supportive, enthusiastic, and well-defined relationship with his or her volunteer organization.

One volunteer wrote, "Kyle is an enthusiastic ambassador for the volunteers. He understands the importance of our work and how it fits in to reinforce the hospital's reputation of excellence, compassion, and community. Kyle was one of the first leaders in the organization to push for volunteers to get back into the hospital after the COVID-19 pandemic forced the removal of all volunteers from the hospital in 2020. He is aware of the vital role the volunteers play in the hospital. Kyle also takes every opportunity to highlight our efforts in presentations and publications for member organizations, the business community, our own employees, foundation donors and the community at large. He leads by example by being a current member of the team, along with his spouse and high school aged children."

It is also noted that Nondorf is very "tuned in" to the needs of the volunteers by often asking, "What can I do to help?"

The pride that the volunteers of SSM Health St. Mary's Madison have in Nondorf is evident. Another volunteer sums up this feeling by saying, "I've never seen a leader as connected to every person that they come in contact with. Kyle always seems to know each and every one by name, always showing genuine caring to them all!"

2022 "Best of the Best" Committee Members are Jackie Halverson, chair, SSM Ripon Community Hospital Axillary, Ripon; Trudy Wallin, Friends of Vernon Memorial Healthcare, Viroqua; Kay Ludwig, Aspirus Volunteers, Medford; Melanie Miller, Partners of Stoughton Health, Stoughton; and John Russell 2021 Award Recipient and President/CEO, Prairie Ridge Health, Columbus.



*Kyle Nondorf (top center) and volunteers of SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital Madison.*

## New Officers Elected

At the 2022 convention, new officers were elected and installed. Officers for January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024 are: Sharon Scott, president; Patsy Phippen, president-elect; Iva Mulhern, secretary; and John Tully, treasurer.

All have been members of Partners of WHA for many years, being involved at the local, district and state levels. Their installation was a visible demonstration of their commitment and dedication to our organization.

Our thanks to these individuals for accepting their leadership positions. With dedicated officers and interested members working toward growth, I am confident we will achieve much success in the years ahead.

Congratulations and best wishes to the new officers.

*Jan Molaska, Nominating Committee Chair*

*Committee members: Jaci Fuller, Ann Korb, Melanie Miller*



John Tully  
Newly installed 2023-2024 officers are: Sharon Scott - President, Patsy Pippin - President-Elect, John Tully - Treasurer and Iva Mulhern - Secretary

## WAVE Awards Presented at Convention



Fundraising Program

Mercy Hospital Volunteers at Ascension Mercy, Oshkosh  
"BAKELESS BAKE SALE"



Community Outreach and/or Collaboration Program  
Aspirus Wausau Hospital Volunteers  
"RAINBOW'S END CAMP"



In-service Hospital Program

SSM Health St. Mary's Madison Volunteers, Madison  
"BLUE TOTE BAGS"



Community Service Program

Partners of Crossing Rivers Health, Prairie du Chien  
"LEAVING A LEGACY MEMORY HUGGABLES"

# Congratulations to the Partners of WHA 2022 Honor Point Award Winners!



## Community Health Education Report



Sue Schuelke

We have now entered the influenza season while continuing to manage another virus, COVID-19. Vaccines and vaccine boosters are recommended as the front-line defense

against these illnesses. The Partners of WHA State Convention was a “booster” for me. To meet more of my volunteer colleagues in person—to receive a hug, a handshake—that human touch so vital to our well-being.

Several convention workshops included a variety of health-related topics, such as joint pain, behavioral/mental health, aging, cardiovascular disease, toxic chemicals, pelvic health, end-of-life conversations, and medication use. An early morning CHE Special Interest meeting was held with good attendance and great participation! The Wheel of Knowledge activity on infectious diseases along with giveaways added fun to the discussion on challenges the CHE chairs are facing.

The last in a series of community health education articles, Common Infectious Diseases-Series 6, covers some of the more common sexually transmitted diseases/infections and Polio. You can find this information on the Partners of WHA website under Health Education.

My term as state CHE chair for Partners of WHA is coming to an end. I have thoroughly enjoyed the role of educator to help inform volunteers and their leaders on health topics related to infectious diseases. A heartfelt “thank you” for your support, interest, and feedback!

Wishing you the best of health today, tomorrow, and in the days ahead!

Sue Schuelke, CHE Chair  
Email: [sschuelk@charter.net](mailto:sschuelk@charter.net)

## Public Policy Education Report

The CEO Panel discussion at the Partners conventions has always offered important insights on the operation of the Wisconsin health care system. The makeup of this year’s panel was quite unique, given the young ages and tenure of the participants at their current organizations. Participants included Kyle Nondorf, president and CEO, SSM St. Mary’s Hospital, Madison; Christopher Brophy, CEO, Crossing Rivers Health, Prairie du Chien; David Hartberg, CEO, Vernon Memorial Healthcare, Viroqua; and Carl Selvick, CEO, Black River Memorial Hospital, Black River Falls.



Bill McCullough

**The physical and emotional impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic** on professional caregivers was one issue that was addressed. The panel stated how their entire staff has been impacted both physically and emotionally. Part of this physical and emotional stress was a result of the trauma and timely treatment needed by many patients requiring hospitalization. This challenge to staff meant that more hospital beds were needed, and a multitude of patients required post-treatment convalescence. This was occurring at the same time nursing homes were changing their patient transfer policies. As a result, hospitals were required to “house” patients for an extended period. One critical access hospital reported a patient remaining in their emergency department for almost two days. Black River Memorial Hospital was overwhelmed by 10,000 Afghan refugees housed at Ft. McCoy. Added to that were over 300 births! All this has been impacted by the largest vacancy rate in the registered nursing profession since 2005.

**“Allowing licensed professionals to practice to the top of their license”** is an ongoing challenge and initiative to which WHA is deeply engaged. This is of particular significance in clinical settings where it has been estimated that up to 80% of medical professional time may be spent performing non-professional activities that do not require the level of training acquired by a physician.

The **financial stress on hospitals resulting from the pandemic** is another question of considerable importance. Unlike other “non-health care” related businesses, hospitals are not structured to pass on all costs to the consumer. Some comments on those projected costs include: 1) a 50% negative balance on hospital balance sheets; 2) 15% labor cost increases; and 3) increased supply chain costs of over 14%. In addition, during the pandemic all hospitals incurred an increased cost for labor. This was especially true where “traveling nurses” were needed to fill the void of those retiring or seeking less stressful jobs with

(Continued on page 10)

**Public Policy Education Report...continued from page 9**

similar compensation. Added to this is the expectation for continuing wage inflation in health care in two years that would otherwise occur in eight years. These are costs not covered by either Medicare or Medicaid.

One bright light during this time perhaps, was the advancement of telemedicine, particularly in rural areas, and for the behavioral health services that were made available.

The value of volunteers was expressed by each of the panelists. One panelist acknowledged the positive impact of his volunteer organization in the delivery of masks to not only staff, but in making and distributing special masks for children. His decision to join that hospital's administrative team was positively influenced by the value of volunteers. Another panelist noted the significance in the "Power of Presence" brought forward by the efforts of the volunteers. Through our collective efforts, volunteers bring hope to those who so desperately need just that.

Bill McCullough, PPE Chair  
Email: [webirish2@gmail.com](mailto:webirish2@gmail.com)

**Strategic Planning Report...continued from page 3**

Now as we move back to in-person meetings and activities, volunteers feel a new energy and stronger commitment to our organizations. We realized the loss of not being able to volunteer in the capacity that we were used to, the loss of connection. Each of us makes up Partners. WE are the catalysts to move our organization forward on local, district and state levels. This cannot fall just to committee members and the executive board. There are opportunities for everyone, with available mentoring, written guidelines, and a [website](#) with a wealth of information and helpful forms. Have you used some of these in your volunteer groups? If not, check out what you've missed. Take a volunteer with you to your district meeting or to convention and show them what we're about! We are larger and stronger when we all participate!!

[Sherry Jelic](#), Chair, Strategic Planning Committee



Directors of Volunteer Services got together at Convention 2022.  
Bottom row (l to r): Janelle Cisneros, Brandy Sikora, Cindy Clark.  
Top row (l to r): Yo Voigt, Samantha Matern, Ann Bergmann, Joanne Johnson and Carrie Doro.

**Reaching Out Deadlines**

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
February 2023	Fri., Jan. 13, 2023
May 2023	Fri., April 14, 2023
August 2023	Fri., July 14, 2023

Partners *Reaching Out* is published four times a year by Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc. Visit the Partners website at [www.partnersofwha.org](http://www.partnersofwha.org). Direct questions or comments to:

Kay Lyndahl, Newsletter Editor  
Summer: 1909 S. Lake Michigan Drive  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235  
Phone: 920-746-5122

Winter: 2418 Kensington Greens Drive  
Sun City Center, FL 33573  
Phone: 813-633-6624  
Email: [kaylyndahl@gmail.com](mailto:kaylyndahl@gmail.com)