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**WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT/PARTNERS OF WHA**

**FALL/WINTER 2018/19 NEWSLETTER**

**CHAIR NOTES:**

Why does summer go so fast and sometimes winter drags on? I do like the four seasons,however, as change is good. Fall is so colorful, winters are white, spring brings new life and green and summer the flowers are in full bloom. Yes, change is good - even in an organization. Sometimes it takes awhile to get used to a change and different ideas and processes but worth it in the end.

We just finished a great convention in Stevens Point. Sheree Schaefer and her convention crew did an excellent job! The workshops were interesting and there is always something new to learn, plus seeing friends from all over the State. Yes, volunteers are the “Super Heroes” at their local hospital. I hope volunteers who were unable to attend this year will have the opportunity to attend the 2019 convention. The dates are October 1 - 3, 2019 at the Red Lion Paper Valley Hotel, Appleton. If you have any suggestions for the convention, please let me know or you may contact Sharon Scott, Convention chair,at dick-sharon-scott@prodigy.net.

My term as Chair of the West Central District will end in April, 2019 and I will hand over the gavel to John Tully. John has been very active in the Partners of WHA and when Rice Lake Medical volunteers decided to withdraw from the Partners of WHA, John began volunteering for the Cumberland Healthcare Volunteer Partners. Betty Oddo,who is presently the Secretary of St. Joseph’s Hospital Volunteer Partners, Chippewa Falls, and District Secretary/Treasurer, has agreed to be Chair-Elect and Donella Christianson, Stanley, Partners with Our Lady of Victory Hospital, will fill the position of Secretary/Treasurer. The new officers will be sworn in at the spring district meeting which is planned for April 3, 2019, in Chippewa Falls, with the Volunteer Partners of HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital hosting, So, save the date and plan on attending. More information will be sent out at a later date.

Congratulations go to the Partners of HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital, Chippewa Falls, for winning the WAVE award in the Community Service Program for their Babysitting Clinic. Thanks to all the organizations that applied for the WAVE award but did not win - there is always next year! All programs are winners as they benefit the hospitals and communities.

In addition, The Partners of HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital were awarded the HAVE award, a national award, for their program of Community Gardens. The HAVE (Hospital Awards for Volunteer Excellence) was established 35 years ago in 1983 by the American Hospital Association, and it acknowledges the value of volunteerism to individual lives and highlights volunteer services that improve healthcare. It was established to help hospitals attract and retain volunteers by recognizing outstanding contributions of organized programs of volunteer services. Again, congratulations to the Partners of HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital, Chippewa Falls.

Honor Points certificates were awarded at the October 2018 annual convention. Congratulations to the West Central District organizations who received the certificate on a job well done! Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, River Falls Area Hospital Auxiliary did not have their dues to the Treasurer by the deadline. However, congratulations to them for their dedication and work they do.

So - a reminder, it is important to have your yearly dues sent in to the State Treasurer by the deadline!

Also, the Local Organization President’s Annual Report to the Partners of WHA, Inc. for the period of January 1st through December 31, 2018 will be due by January 31, 2019. Please send the reports to me. Reminder for the Community Health Education Chair (CHE) and Public Policy Education Chair (PPE) that their reports will also be due.

Each Partners of WHA hospital volunteer organization is to be congratulated for their dedication to provide services to their hospital, patients, families and hospital employees. Each volunteer is important in the work they do, so thank you for your dedication and service!

Be sure to mark your calendar for the district meetings and the annual convention on October 1 - 3, 2019. The focus for the CHE will be mental health & suicide.

Please contact me if you have any questions or ideas for the Partners of WHA or the West Central District. I would like to hear from you! Best Wishes for a very Merry & Blessed Christmas!

 ***NEW YEAR WISHES FOR YOU!***

*We thank you for your time*

*and talent as you serve,*

*Because as a volunteer*

*It’s really what you deserve!*

*Dedication to the job,*

*Helping patients, families and all,*

*Whatever job there is -*

*You always answer the call!*

*So, here’s to the new year -*

*May it bring happiness each day,*

*And good health for you,*

*And friends along the way.*

***HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!***

Jaci Fuller, West Central District Chair

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**AND REMEMBER…**

 *It’s not how many hours you put in — it’s what you put into the hours!*

***DATES TO REMEMBER***

January 31, 2019 President’s Annual Report, CHE & PPE Reports Due

March 19, 20 & 21, 2019 State Board Meeting in Madison

April 3, 2019 West Central District Meeting HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital

 Chippewa Falls WI

April 7 - 13, 2019 Volunteer Week

April 17, 2019 Advocacy Day Madison WI

April 21, 2019 Easter

Date to be Determined West Central District Meeting River Falls WI

October 1- 3, 2019 Partners of WHA Convention Appleton

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Installation of officers for the West Central District will take place at the Spring 2019 West Central District meeting to be held on April 3, 2019 at the Presbyterian Church, Chippewa Falls, hosted by the Partners of HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital. The slate of officers include John Tully for Chair, Betty Oddo for Chair-Elect and Donella Christiansen for Secretary/Treasurer.

Thanks to the Nominating Committee: Cumberland Healthcare Volunteer Partners - Ann Bergmann; St. Croix Regional Medical Center Volunteer Partners -Kathy Luken; Osceola Medical Center - JoAnn Kuntz.

**DISTRICT CHAIR-ELECT REPORT**

Hi! My name is John Tully and I am Chair-Elect for the West Central District. I am looking forward to being the next Chair. I have some very big shoes to fill. Jaci Fuller has done an outstanding job as Chair.

I can only hope to do as well, I hope everyone who attended the Partners convention enjoyed it. Yes there were a couple rough spots, but overall there was a lot of good information to be had.

I would like to throw out a suggestion. Could the District fall meeting be held after the convention instead of before? Think about it and let me know. I look forward to seeing everyone at the Spring District meeting in Chippewa Falls.

John Tully, Chair Elect

**SECRETARY/TREASURER REPORT**

It has been my privilege to serve as West Central District Secretary/Treasurer and meet so many wonderful people, both at our district meetings and at the annual State convention. We should never underestimate the importance that Partners play in the everyday life of our hospitals.

I am presently serving as Secretary of the Partners of HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital in Chippewa Falls and the Chair of the Steak Fry fundraising event for our organization. I look forward in serving as the Chair-Elect for the West Central District.

I hope everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving. May you have a Blessed Christmas and may your new year be filled with good health, happiness and joy.

Betty Oddo, District Secretary/Treasurer

**NOTES FROM DISTRICT OFFICER NOMINEE**

**SECRETARY/TREASURER NOMINEE:**

Hi! My name is Donella Christianson and I am Co-President of Partners With Our Lady of Victory Hospital in Stanley. I have been married to my husband, Norm, for 50 years. We have five children, 4 boys and a girl, 14 grandchildren, one great-granddaughter and a great-grandson due in November. I have been a member of Partners with OLVH for more years than I can remember! Several years ago,I had the privilege of being West Central District Chair-Elect for two years, then Chair for two years. It was a wonderful experience! Since I haven’t held the position of Secretary/Treasurer, I thought I could do that. Then I will have held every officer position for the District!

Donella Christianson

**COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION (CHE) CHAIR**

The METH and OPIOIDS epidemics are a huge problem facing West Central Wisconsin law enforcement. Now there is another problem which is E-cigarettes. Cigarettes kill people. The need is to nix smoking habits at an early age, and that includes the use of E-cigarettes. Do you know what VAPING is? E-cigarettes produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine-the addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars and other tobacco products—flavors and other chemicals that help make the aerosol. Users inhale the aerosol into their lungs, and bystanders also can breathe in the aerosol when the user exhales into the air. Eau Claire police have posted a VAPING video on their Facebook page.

Marijuana is another drug that can also worsen an illness for people who already have schizophrenia.

The shortage of psychiatrists in Wisconsin is in Northwestern and West Central regions. This leads to long wait, lengthy trips and even abandoned treatment for many patients who need mental health services. In Wisconsin of the 72 counties, 20 do not have a single practicing psychiatrist. The same issue applies nationwide, where only 900 to 950 new psychiatrists are licensed annually. To alleviate this situation the Medical College of Wisconsin has launched psychiatry residency programs in Wausau and Green Bay.

The focus for Community Health Education for Partners of WHA in 2019 & 2020 will be on Behavioral Health.

Submitted by:

Bonnie R. Olson, Chair

West Central District Community Health Education

*It is never too late to be what you might have been.*

 *-Georg Eliot*

**PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION (PPE) CHAIR**

**HEALTHCARE UNDER NEW GOVERNOR**

According to reported news from the new Wisconsin governor, Tony Evers, there are a multitude of changes needed in Health Insurance Plans available to Wisconsin Residents.

“Too few people have access to affordable health insurance, and the cost of healthcare in Wisconsin continues to be too high”.

 Following are measures he proposes:

1. Take immediate action to accept federal Medicaid expansion dollars which would insure thousands more Wisconsinites now struggling to find affordable coverage.
2. Do everything in his power to stabilize health insurance markets and bring down costs, including prescription drug prices.
3. Invest in preventive health programs, especially for Wisconsin women that have been defunded over the last seven years.
4. Extend protections for Wisconsinites with pre-existing conditions. It is estimated that half of Wisconsin residents have some kind of pre-existing health condition like cancer, diabetes, heart condition, obesity or depression.

He comments finally; “we cannot afford to return to the days where health insurance companies held all the power and could cut off patients who simply cost them too much money”.

 It appears considerable work is to be initiated under Governor Evers’ Administration to improve overall Healthcare. We will need to stay tuned to news provided by our Wisconsin Hospital Association website for progress.

Bill McCullough, Chair

West Central District Pubic Policy Education

**ACTIVITIES OF WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT VOLUNTEERS**

(The following taken from the President’s Reports of the Fall West Central District meeting)

**Partners of HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital,** Chippewa Falls, sponsored a Steak Fry in August which raised over $3,000. The event also included Bingo and 50/50 raffles.

**Cumberland Healthcare Volunteer Partners** began a new project - Blanket Making -and each week volunteers gather to assemble and make “tied” blankets which are given to each hospitalized patient.

**HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital, Eau Claire**, partnered with an elementary school to supply backpacks, tennis shoes and school supplies for at risk, in-need students. Items also were donated to the school district for greater distribution where needed.

**Partners of Osceola Medical Center** reviewed their Bylaws and made some changes, which were approved by the general membership. Fall fundraising events included a Collective Goods Sale, Linen Sale and Love-Lights.

**St Croix Regional Medical Center Volunteer Partners** members decided to make “cancer awareness bracelets” for the Pamper Me Pink Awareness event held every October (an idea given by River Falls Volunteer Partners). Fundraising events have included the 52nd Salad Luncheon, the Nutman and Linen Sale.

**Volunteer Partners of River Falls Area Hospital** has a volunteer advisory council made up of 10 volunteers which meets every other month. The Hospital auxiliary merged with the Hospital volunteer program in an effort to limit duplication of services.

**Partners with Our Lady of Victory Hospital, Stanley**, have new members who are planning some community activities to make their group more visible in the community. Also planned for the board is a pot luck and bowling. New members bring new ideas!

***Smile!***

*Smile - it’s a thing that can make*

*your soul leap for joy and your*

*life easier to live because*

*You make someone else’s day!*