

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

This is an Exciting Time for Partners!



Peg Larson

We had a great spring tour with five virtual district meetings and two in-person meetings. Terri Donlin organized a great Gift Shop/Fundraising Symposium with hybrid attendance. While we had a couple of hiccups with the technology, we were able to share some great information with those who could attend in person and those who couldn't. Thank you to all those who came and shared information. It

was great to see you!

We are preparing two learning/networking opportunities for our members. Most exciting is our convention in October. We will be in person at the Chula Vista in Wisconsin Dells October 11-13. In addition to fabulous speakers, workshops, vendors, and awards, we will have the luxury of time together, side conversations, and getting to know each other again. One thing that has been reinforced for me through the pandemic is that there is no substitute for one-on-one conversations. Various virtual options can facilitate business, but it is also important to know people on a different level.

When we spend time together working on a project, we can learn each other's strengths and weaknesses. Each of us can broaden our view of "normal" by sharing our expertise and experience. Time allows absorption and processing of information. We can expand our skill set through mentoring (formal or informal), education, networking, and practice. Our convention provides opportunities for individuals to grow through all of these methods. We hope that you will join us in the Dells.

On August 17 from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m., the regional collaboration group is hosting a virtual workshop focused on recruiting. Is your group back to pre-COVID numbers and activities? Are you struggling to restart your activities? Join us to share strategies for recruiting both pre-COVID and new members. At this writing, the details are being finalized, so check the [Partners website](#) for the format and registration link.

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A Message from the President-Elect

Happy Place

"Holy Hannah," it's so difficult to fathom it is the middle of July as I write this article! Isn't there an old saying, "time flies when you are having fun?" I certainly hope each of you are enjoying many summertime activities that place you in your special "happy place."



Sharon Scott

Some of the many "happy places" I have been in the past several months include the wonderful Spring Tour and the Gift Shop and Fundraising Symposium. How special it was for the traveling team of Peg Larson, Partners president; Sue Schuelke, state community health chair; Bill McCullough, state public policy chair; and me, Partners president-elect to spend time with the volunteers from the Southern and Western districts, receiving those much-appreciated hugs, "breaking bread" together, conversing face-to-face, and hearing volunteer activities are resuming. Of course, the virtual meetings have their own uniqueness—seeing your smiling faces and waves are so incredibly special, too. The Partners May Symposium for Gift Shop and Fundraising had its own specialness—being together for more than a few hours, spending time re-connecting, and of course the extremely informative and interactive sessions. After a two-year absence of in-person events, it was a wonderful feeling to realize we are beginning to return to a semblance of normalcy.

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A Message from the President...continued from page 1

Partners has been blessed through the years by all the people who have committed their time and resources to learn and grow together. Thank you for supporting the health of your community.

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

Sadly, we have learned several local organizations have not been able to sustain their organization's memberships to remain viable. Imagine being a health care volunteer, wanting to share your time and talents but the opportunity to do so has been terminated. Receiving notice from a local organization's resignation from Partners of WHA not only hurts the local health care venue but is a tremendous loss to the Partners organization—a loss of potential future leaders of Partners and dedicated volunteers who engaged in extraordinary activities that benefitted their communities. As chair of the state by-laws committee, it is genuinely concerning that “membership-at-large” was eliminated from our by-laws several years ago. It will be the “mission” of this committee to review the previous guidelines, research all viable solutions, and reach out to our peers, YOU, our fellow volunteers for your thoughts. This will NOT be a task easily resolved. It is my goal the by-laws committee will present a verifiable change for convention 2023. Partners need to retain these valuable volunteers.

Returning to a “happy place” mindset, Iva Mulhern and Patsy Pippin, convention co-chairs, are planning a wonderful convention 2022. I am personally looking forward to seeing YOU October 11-13 at the Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells.

Stay safe and healthy and enjoy the remainder of the summer in your incredibly special “HAPPY PLACE.”

Sharon Scott
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The Road to Red Lodge

Summer greetings to you! I hope you all are enjoying some sun, relaxation, and a little fun during these longer days. Later in August, I will be visiting Red Lodge, Montana with my husband, Matt. All my life, I have heard about Red Lodge, as it is the birthplace and hometown of my late grandmother, Gertrude Stickney, or Nanny, as I affectionately called her. I look forward to seeing the home she was raised in, the Main Street where she spent time with her siblings, as well as her final resting place. The beauty of Montana will be an added bonus to a very special trip that I am looking forward to.

When I think of Nanny, I think of the word “legacy.” Even though I was only eight years old when she passed, she left a permanent mark on my heart and in my life. Her legacy continues even after 40+ years since she passed. Sometimes I think about my life, as well as the work that I do, and wonder if it will serve as a legacy to my time in the world. Do you ever wonder the same thing?

The legacy that the Partners of WHA have built, and continue to build upon, can be experienced in every member hospital in the state of Wisconsin. It can be seen in the eyes of the patient whose face lights up when being brought a bouquet of flowers from the gift shop. It can be felt in the soft baby blanket covering a newborn's body. The examples are endless, but the feelings are universal. Feelings of comfort, belonging, and love.

As the work starts to ramp up for the annual Partners Convention in October, as well as for the selection of the 2022 WAVE and BOB awards, I think it is important to remember the “why” of the work that we all do. When we are busy and stressed it is easy to forget that. I hope the legacy that you all build on every day as volunteers of the hospitals in the state of Wisconsin is something that you stop to pause, think about, and celebrate every once in a while. It matters.

I look forward to seeing everyone in October in the Dells. Please enjoy one of my favorite photos ever. My Nanny and her little boy, my dad, John Stickney. That little boy will be celebrating 80 years young this year.

[Leigh Ann S. Larson](#)

WHA Vice President of Education and Marketing; Executive Director of the WHA Foundation; Partners of WHA Liaison



Stress and Gut Health

During the pandemic, we all experienced more than a usual amount of stress. Interestingly enough, stress can greatly influence the health of our stomach, or as medical professionals use the word “gut.” Stress not only takes a mental toll on your body, but also a physical toll, which includes wreaking havoc on your gut and digestion.

Short-term stress can cause you to lose your appetite and your digestion to slow down. Long-term stress can trigger GI issues like constipation, diarrhea, indigestion, or an upset stomach. Chronic stress can lead to other serious issues, like irritable bowel syndrome.

If you find that stress is affecting your digestion, here are four tips that can help improve gut health.

- Exercise like walking, running, or swimming, also yoga may improve those symptoms.
- Meditation may help your body to relax and get ready for digestion.
- Taking prebiotics or probiotics can create the ideal environment for good bacteria to flourish and support digestion.
- If you smoke, kick the habit. Smoking can increase your risk of developing a peptic ulcer, GI disease, and related cancers.

Stress can make existing pain seem even worse than it is. Multiple studies have found that psychologically based approaches lead to greater improvement in digestive symptoms compared with only conventional treatment.

Healthline Harvard University

Deb Brinsko, Health Education Chair, Oconomowoc Memorial Auxiliary and Volunteer Services



Did You Know?



- Rainbows appear as full circles when you're in the sky on an airplane. They only appear as half circles from the ground because there's no rain below the person viewing it.
- Talking to yourself is a good way to help maintain your focus while completing a task.
- Humans have more empathy for dogs than they do for other humans.
- 85% of people have experienced a dream so real that they were not sure if it happened in real life or not.
- The first non-human to win an Oscar was Mickey Mouse.
- Banana is a happy fruit. Eating just one can help you relieve irritable emotions, anger, or depression.
- The Statue of Liberty was made with copper, but due to oxidation, it turned green.

Public Policy Education Report



Bill McCullough

The “Great Resignation” cause and effect? There has been increasing pressure on the state’s health care workforce driven by retirements within health care field at the same time demand for health care by an aging population is rising. This is a trend referred to as the “Silver Tsunami.” This is not a new phenomenon! What has further impacted this is the burnout among health care workers resulting from successive surges of COVID-19 over the past two years and escalating demand for delayed health care services intensified by a growing health care workforce shortage in the state. This combination of the Silver Tsunami, the Great Resignation and a persistent pandemic that pushed hospital occupancy to its limit resulted in an increase in vacancies in 13 of 17 professions tracked by the WHA Workforce Report. Registered nurse vacancy rates were the highest they have been since 2005, while seven other positions registered double digit vacancy rates.

From the inadequate public health infrastructure to support COVID testing and vaccination, to the collapse of the long-term care system, the COVID pandemic exposed the fragile nature of our health care system. Hospitals and health systems stepped up to fill many voids, often creating their own public testing and vaccination sites, and expanding post-acute care capacity. The result was that for every health care worker pulled into one of these roles was one less position supporting patients in need of hospital care. This workforce crunch has created a mounting challenge for both hospitals and patients. The demand for traveling nurses from third party staffing agencies has caused a spike from \$80/hr. in mid-2021 to more than \$200/hr. later that year. Fatigued health care workers retired, took contract jobs or left the health care field altogether, creating higher vacancy rates. 1 in 6 RNs changed jobs in 2021; 1 in 5 LPNs changed jobs; and 1 in 3 CNAs changed jobs in 2021. While demand has now leveled off, the current level of inflation has a growing impact on wages and salaries.

As a result of the 2022 Health Care Workforce Report, WHA has recommended the following strategies to support Wisconsin’s health care workforce:

1. Build public-private partnerships to “grow our own” health care workforce;
2. Promote rapid innovations to retain and recruit health care workers;
3. Break down barriers to top-of-skill practice;
4. Bolster acceptance and utilization of integrated health care technology;
5. Reduce regulatory burden and increase regulatory flexibility; and,
6. Support care in the best setting—inpatient, outpatient, or post-acute.

In our volunteer roles we must continue to advocate for these measures when asked to do so through HEAT Alerts or other solicitations for our voices of advocacy. Let’s continue to do our part.

Bill McCullough, PPE Chair

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As I Get Older I Realize . . .

- I talk to myself because sometimes I need expert advice.
- Sometimes I roll my eyes outbound.
- My people skills are just fine. It’s my tolerance of idiots that needs work.
- The biggest lie I tell myself is “I don’t need to write that down, I’ll remember it.”
- When I was a child, I thought naptime was a punishment. Now it’s like a mini vacation.
- Even duct tape can’t fix stupid, but it can muffle the sound.
- Wouldn’t it be great if we could put ourselves in the dryer for 10 minutes, come out wrinkle-free, and three sizes smaller?



Community Health Education Report



Sue Schuelke

While we may be taking a summer break from volunteer activities and meetings, there is no break from infectious diseases. Monkeypox, Salmonella, Listeria, and of course, COVID-19 and its variants continue to be part of the daily news.

- **Monkeypox:** (7/1/2022) The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) confirmed the first case of Monkeypox in a WI Resident. Monkeypox is not easily spread from person to person. Monkeypox has become a global health emergency as cases continue to rise around the world.
- **COVID variant, Omicron B.5:** This is the primary COVID virus infecting people at the present time. A booster dose of the COVID vaccine specific to Omicron is being developed for use this fall. Sixty percent of the U.S. population has been infected with the COVID virus.
- **Salmonella:** Outbreaks in the United States, including Wisconsin, occur every year linked to backyard poultry. Even with healthy chickens and clean backyards, Salmonella can still be present in chicken poop and on their bodies.
- **Listeria:** Big Olaf Creamery ice cream was recently found to cause a Listeria outbreak in people residing in or having visited Florida. If the bacteria is contracted during pregnancy, it can spread to the fetus through the placenta and cause fetal loss. This ice cream product is only sold in Florida.

(The above information in bold categories comes from the CDC and Wisconsin DHS websites.)

The next community health education series on Infectious Disease will cover Tuberculosis (TB) and Noroviruses. Look for this information on the [Partners of WHA website](#) in the month of August.

Plans for the CHE Special Interest meeting during the Partners of WHA State Convention in October are underway. Learning should be fun as well as interesting so there will be a fun (maybe even a challenging activity) during the session. I look forward to seeing many local and district CHE chairs at convention! As always, stay safe, stay well, and enjoy the rest of the summer months!

Sue Schuelke, CHE Chair

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Convention 2022

The Partners of WHA Convention 2022 is coming up quickly. Neil Ihde will present a pragmatic, fun keynote, "Personalities and Building Relationships." Workshops are being lined up and vendors invited. The menus are being planned and registration and convention booklets are being prepared. Our closing speaker, Heather Whittaker, will send us off with her presentation, "Just PAWS—4 Principles for a Happy Life."



Patsy Pippin and Iva Mulhern, 2022 Partners of WHA Convention co-chairs.

We are collecting some great raffle prizes, so be sure to sell your tickets. If you have any left over, return them with your sold ticket stubs and money at the convention. Just remember, tickets and ticket stubs cannot be sent through the postal service. If you need to return them and won't be able to bring them to convention, send them with someone nearby or send them via UPS or FedEx.

Patsy and I are really excited about seeing everyone this year and we are working to make this a wonderful experience for everyone. The Chula Vista Resort has been so wonderful to work with and we know you will really enjoy this convention site.

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Around the State

St. Joseph's Children Hospital Foundation, Chippewa Falls:

A Family Beach Bash was held in June to benefit St. Joseph's Children's Christmas event. It took place at St. Pete Beach. A raffle, food, and drinks were included.

SSM Health Hospital, Ripon:

Ripon Community Hospital Auxiliary sponsored a luncheon in June for scholarship winners to learn about their post-secondary plans in the health care field.

Ascension Mercy Hospital, Oshkosh:

In July, the volunteers are having a Fun Scrubs and Jeans Friday fundraiser. So, wear your fun scrubs or jeans, donate \$2.00 for each Friday to volunteer services or the gift shop.

Black River Memorial Hospital, Black River Falls:

Partners worked with Blair Online Auctions to raise funds from the sale of artwork no longer displayed in the hospital. One box of artwork raised \$1,780 on 78 pieces. The auction company did not charge for prepping and cataloging each piece for sale!

Kay Lyndahl, Editor

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(Send me your Partners newsletters either by email or hard copy – I'd like to hear what you are doing that I can share with others.)



A few items included in our convention raffle, which includes a child's wooden table and chairs; a Kindle Fire; a hand-knit shawl; purse/scarf/jewelry set; Prairie du Chien vacation package including golf, gift certificate, and hotel; Vera Bradley triple compartment travel bag; Eddie Bauer oversized down throw; one night stay at the Chula Vista Resort; and \$200 cash from Partners of WHA.

Reaching Out Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
November 2022	Wed., Oct. 12, 2022
February 2023	Fri., Jan. 13, 2023
May 2023	Fri., April 14, 2023
August 2023	Fri., July 14, 2023

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2022 Nominating Committee Recommendation of Officers for Partners of WHA for 2023-2024

The 2022 Partners of WHA Nominating Committee members are: Jaci Fuller, West Central District; Ann Korb, Lakes District; Melanie Miller, Southern District; and Sharon Scott, ex officio. The Committee's major responsibility is to nominate the best-qualified candidate(s) for each office. This necessitates giving careful consideration, both as an individual and as a committee, to the requirements and scope of the offices to be filled as well as to the qualifications and abilities needed to fill them. They match these requirements to the qualifications of the candidates. All nominees are evaluated equally and by the same criteria. The following slate of officers will be proposed to the general membership at the Partners Convention in Wisconsin Dells, October 12, 2022:

President - Sharon Scott; President-Elect - Patsy Pippin; Secretary - Iva Mulhern; Treasurer - John Tully.

Thank you to those members who submitted an application expressing interest in serving as an officer for 2023-2024.

Jan Molaska, Chair, 2022 Partners of WHA Nominating Committee; Email: jmolaska@gmail.com

President-Elect: Patsy Pippin



I was born and raised on a farm in Grant County. I look back now and realize all that hard work helped me to get through many challenges in my life.

I have three great kids, two boys and one girl. I raised my kids in Edgerton, WI. I have 10 grandchildren. I have been blessed to be able to be part of them growing up.

I moved around with my husband's job. We left Wisconsin and moved to Texas, then back to Wisconsin, then Indiana. Later I was able to come back to Wisconsin to be closer to my Mom.

I have volunteered in all of my travels. In the Edgerton Auxiliary I put in 1,000 volunteer hours and served as president there. In Wichita Falls, Texas I joined the Newcomers Women's Club, met women and shared our family, children, and just navigated a whole new world. We came back to Wisconsin, then our job sent us to Syracuse, IN. I joined the Women's Business and Professional Club. We raised money to give scholarships to young women.

My work career has always been in customer service. While in Indiana I worked for Purina Mills manufacturing plant in customer service. We serviced dealers in IN, OH, and MI. I was given opportunities to visit other manufacturing plants all over the states. I was then promoted to Customer Service Manager. Many opportunities were given to me. I traveled to our corporate office many times. I took pride in listening, problem solving, and always getting back to my customers and dealers.

Over the years I have volunteered wherever I lived. I was blessed with being able to volunteer in Edgerton, Wichita Falls TX, Indiana, and Boscobel, where I served as president. I have also served as Partners Western District Chair and PPE District Chair.

Serving as President-Elect would be an honor. I am proud to be a part of Partners of WHA. As I thought this decision for me I believe I have learned many life lessons including volunteering. Giving oneself to take on a leadership office is no little step. Serving local, district, and state I will give my all to help my fellow Partners, our local hospitals, volunteers, fundraising, legislation, and health education.

Secretary: Iva Mulhern

I was born and raised in Northwest Iowa, and after getting my education and working as a secretary, I married my high school sweetheart. He joined the military, and we traveled the world for 22 years. When overseas, we lived in Karamursel, Turkey; Berlin, Germany; and Augsburg, Germany. When stateside, we lived in California, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas and Maryland. My volunteering in those years was confined to our daughter's schools, libraries, church women's groups and military wives' clubs. When my husband retired from the military, we moved to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. There, I worked at the Chocolate Haus in Cedar Rapids and The Amana Colonies. I also volunteered again at the schools and the church women's group. After living



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there 10 years, we moved to Prairie du Chien where I immediately got involved in the Partners group at our hospital. I joined the board and served as President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. In addition, I chaired a variety of committees, to include our annual Christmas children's activities/fundraiser, and I volunteer at our hospital gift shop. I have served as District Chair, Chair Elect and Secretary/Treasurer for the Western District. I also volunteer with our church women's group and our local civic club.

My husband, Pat, and I are married 50 years on July 28, and we have two beautiful daughters, two wonderful sons in law and five precious grandchildren.

I would be proud to serve on the Partners of WHA State Board of Directors as Secretary. It is such a wonderful organization, and it would be an honor to be part of supporting our districts and advocating for our local hospital volunteers.

Treasurer: John Tully



John was born in St. Paul Minnesota. Yes, he is a Vikings fan. He attended St. Paul Technical College where he studied to become an electrician. He spent the next 35 years working in the electrical field holding various leadership positions. John was active as a volunteer back then, mainly volunteering in politics. He volunteered on campaigns from city council to state offices to presidential campaigns. He spent one whole legislative session as an intern/lobbyist for his local state representative. John and his wife moved to Cameron, Wisconsin in 1999. He spent the next seven years commuting daily back to St. Paul for work. John retired in 2006 and started his second career—volunteering. After his wife had knee replacement surgery, they both started volunteering at Lakeview Medical Center (now

Marshfield Medical Center-Rice Lake). John was approached about becoming the President-Elect of the volunteer organization. He accepted and became President and then moved on to the district level. He was Secretary/Treasurer, Chair-Elect and then West Central District Chair. In 2017 he was the State Convention Chair in Green Bay. When Lakeview dropped out of Partners John started volunteering at Cumberland Healthcare so that he could stay active in Partners. John enjoys reading, fishing, tracing his family tree—both sides—and all the shooting sports. John and two others started a Family Outdoor Day to introduce youths and their parents to the wonders of the outdoors. It has been happening for 18 years and is totally free to the participants. John is the current State Treasurer of Partners of WHA. John enjoys being a thorn among all the roses.