

*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

## Important Dates



Jan Molaska

According to the Farmer's Almanac, spring began Tuesday, March 20, 2018, at 12:15 p.m. EDT. Unfortunately, it appears the farmers failed to communicate this fact to Mother Nature. As I write this, it is cold, windy, and eight inches of new snow has fallen in Wausau. Springtime is a time of renewal. It is a time to set new goals, establish commitments, and start new projects. But, just like the weather, as much as we try to look ahead to warm sunshine and flowers growing, somehow the cold of the past winter continues to linger. The disharmony within our political system seems more pronounced than ever. Opioid abuse is a national issue that continues to escalate. Health care and Medicare/Medicaid are debated continually with seemingly little progress being made. This might all seem like negative news, but in Wisconsin, we the Partners of WHA have made a difference. Because of the numerous contacts made by HEAT and other members of our organization during the WI budget process, we helped affect the passage of priority items and other important bills. There remains a tremendous amount of work to be done, and we are committed to continuing to advocate for affordable health care and our local hospitals and communities. There is nothing like volunteers that believe in a cause to see it through to its completion.

By the time this is published, the traveling team will have finished visiting the seven districts. These district meetings are very inspiring and provide insights into what is happening in the different areas of the state. To hear the enthusiasm in your voices as you describe the meaningful and worthwhile projects you are involved in is truly heartwarming. The foremost benefit to participating in the meetings was being able to deliver and explain the proposed revised bylaws. Hopefully, each of you has a better understanding of what is being proposed and will be well informed when voting at the membership meeting in October in Stevens Point. The bylaws will be posted on the website ([partnersofwha.org](http://partnersofwha.org)) and in the August edition of *Reaching Out*. There will also be

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## Convention News

Plans are moving along for the Partners of WHA Convention, October 2-4, 2018 at the Holiday Inn and Convention Center in Stevens Point.

We have our keynote speaker, and are working on vendors and workshops that will be informative and educational for our members. The raffle tickets were distributed during the Spring Tour with our Partners state officers. It should be easy to sell tickets—we have some wonderful prizes, including:

- \$200 cash
- 1-night stay – Holiday Inn, Stevens Point
- 1-night stay – The Waters, Minocqua
- 1-night stay – Lake of the Torches Casino, Lac du Flambeau
- Kindle Notebook
- Vera Bradley Throw
- 18-hole golf for two, with cart, Greenwood Hills CC, Wausau
- Beautiful Amish quilt
- Seven district baskets

Just a reminder to bring your raffle tickets and money to the convention. It is against the law to send them through the U. S. Postal Service.

The Wine Raffle will be held a little differently this year. We will be dividing the reds from the whites. There were some suggestions to this in the convention evaluations from last year, and we listened! If you would like to donate a bottle of wine, please bring a \$10 value bottle to the convention. We will be drawing for a winner of a wine gift basket for those who enter.

More information in the next *Reaching Out!* Enjoy your summer.

*Sheree Schaefer*  
Convention Chair

***A Message from the President...***  
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a teleconference in September for individuals to join a discussion and have questions regarding the bylaws answered. The exact date has not been set but will be posted and individuals notified when the date is confirmed. My additional goals for participating in the meetings were to listen to any concerns your local organizations might have, answer any questions, and determine what you would like Partners to assist you with. The Partners organization can only affect change if we understand the needs of the local organizations and the districts.

Speaking of convention - be sure to mark your calendars for the 2018 Partners of WHA convention to be held October 2-4 at the Holiday Inn and Convention Center in Stevens Point, WI. The Convention Committee, with Sheree Schaefer at the helm, is working tirelessly to make it informative, educational, and, yes, enjoyable. Our theme of "Volunteers: Everyday Superheroes" will spotlight the men and women in the armed forces, police, firefighters, EMTs, medical personnel, and everyone that makes a difference on a daily basis. Mostly, we will be honoring and celebrating YOU, the volunteers—the everyday heroes that touch and make a difference in so many lives. Life is a journey to be celebrated, and we want to celebrate each of you at the convention in Stevens Point.

Any organization is only as good as the members make it. To remain the effective organization that we have become, we need innovative members to step up into leadership positions and provide the guidance necessary to manage the ever-changing demands of the volunteer organizations. I'm sure many of you are thinking, "I could never do that." I thought the same thing. What changed for me was someone saying to me, "Believe in yourself and have faith in your abilities." This is my message to each of you. You can do whatever you want to do—if you just BELIEVE.

I am so honored to have the opportunity to serve as your president and to work with all our dedicated members. Please know that communication is my number one priority, so contact me at any time via phone calls or email. "No one is more cherished in this world than someone who lightens the burden of another." (Anonymous) YOU are cherished! YOU are our everyday hero. I look forward to seeing you all at convention.

*Jan Molaska*  
*715-359-9303 (H); 715-581-9304 (C)*  
*Email: jmolaska@gmail.com*

## **New Bylaws to Be Presented**

In October of 2016, the Bylaws Committee and full Partners of WHA Board talked about recurring issues with Bylaws revisions. Each revision made in the last few years required changes in multiple sections of the current bylaws and some resulted in conflicts between sections. Rewording sections also resulted in awkward language. As announced at the 2017 convention, the voting members of the Board (the officers, past president, district chairs, CHE, and PPE) had a retreat, chaired by President Mary Licht, to discuss the mission and structure of Partners. The result of the retreat was a draft of a new set of bylaws. To be certain that the new set of bylaws met the requirements of the Articles of Incorporation and the laws of the State of Wisconsin, the Board has contracted with an attorney with expertise in bylaws. This expert has added language to cover many situations the Board did not foresee and to clarify the required procedures in those situations.

On Spring tour, the new bylaws were presented to each District. A copy of the proposed Bylaws can be downloaded from the Partners of WHA Home Page at [partnersofwha.org](http://partnersofwha.org). The current bylaws are on the Leadership Handbook page. Questions and comments can be addressed to Jan Molaska. At convention in October, the membership will be asked to approve the new bylaws in their entirety.

Please study the proposed bylaws. There will be a teleconference scheduled in September (date yet to be determined) to answer questions and concerns. Please send questions and comments to Jan Molaska prior to September 1, 2018.

*Jan Molaska*

## Strategic Planning Report

The Strategic Planning Committee has been working very hard to complete their goals for 2017 and 2018.

The four major goals for 2017 and 2018 are:

1. Address the Changing Face of Volunteers
2. Continuous Improvement of Communications within All Levels of the Partners of WHA Organization
3. Strengthen Partners of WHA/WADVS Relationship/ Collaboration
4. Increase Advocacy Activity

### Address the Changing Face of Volunteers

- The Bylaws revision has been completed and will be voted on at the 2018 Convention.
- Suggestion - Create posters/handouts to distribute on Spring Tour to explain "WHO WE ARE."
- District chairs were encouraged to recommend to local Partners groups to include a state Partners update on all local meeting agendas.
- New members were given a mentor. They felt it was helpful and that they should be assigned a mentor as soon as they start their new position.
- District chairs and Partners Board members can submit names of individuals who would be a good candidate for a local, district or state position.

### Continuous Improvement of Communication within all Levels of the Partners of WHA Organization

- The organizational Chart has been revised.
- Teleconference calls were held on the WAVE and the Best of the Best. Teleconference calls will be continued as they were very successful. Possible new teleconference calls will be on completing local and district forms and one on convention.
- Job descriptions for the state and district have been completed. The local descriptions will be worked on soon.

### Strengthen Partners of WHA/WADVS Relationship/Collaboration

- Ongoing communication with WADVS President and ours.
- WADVS President attended our meeting in March and will be attending the 2018 convention.
- Jan attended the WADVS meeting in 2017 and will attend their convention in June.

### Increase Advocacy Activity

- Promoted *The Valued Voice* - 165 new subscriptions; HEAT- 12 new members.
- Summarized annual district and state reports in order to share with each district.
- Sought out CEOs for the CEO Panel - Attended meeting in Washington, D.C.
- Prepared articles for *Reaching Out* and held listening/ brainstorming sessions.

*Dorothy Revnew, Chair*

262-569-2763

Email: [drevnew@wi.rr.com](mailto:drevnew@wi.rr.com)

## Join the Conversation on The Best of The Best and Wave Awards

Do you have questions regarding either the WAVE or the Best of the Best applications form and need help completing your application? Perhaps this year is the first time you are responsible for completing the form or want to find ways to make it better. Help is available. On May 8 at 12 noon Partners of WHA will hold a telephone conference to provide you with necessary information on the process and to answer any questions you have regarding the applications.

Mary Lou Bausch, chair of the Best of the Best Award; Pat Freeders, chair of the WAVE Awards; and Jennifer Frank, our WHA liaison, will be available for a question and answer session.

To join the conversation, go to the Partners of WHA website, click on Awards and complete the link to join the group. Please sign up early so we can forward the necessary information for you to join in.

We look forward to hearing from you.

## Hofer, Hoelter Join WHA Government Relations Team

The Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) has added new members to its government relations team. Kari Hofer is the new vice president, advocacy, and Jon Hoelter is WHA's new director of federal and state relations. Both Hofer and Hoelter started their new positions in February.



*Kari Hofer*

Hofer comes to WHA from the Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) where she has led the WMC Foundation as executive director since November 2016, responsible for all fundraising efforts needed to implement the WMC Foundation's programs and annual events, including corporate sponsorships and corporate and private foundation grants. Hofer also has an extensive background in political fundraising, including serving as the Wisconsin finance director for U.S. Senator Ron

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### Hofer, Hoelter Join WHA (Continued from page 3)

Johnson's successful 2016 re-election campaign, the deputy finance director for the Linda Lingle U.S. Senate Committee, finance director for the Republican Party of Wisconsin, and the Hawaii Republican Party.



Jon Hoelter

Hoelter comes to WHA from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), where he has served as DHS legislative advisor since July 2015. In addition to his policy and legislative responsibilities at DHS, Hoelter served as the DHS Secretary's designee for the Child Abuse, Neglect, and Prevention Board; Criminal Justice

Coordinating Council; Early Childhood Advisory Council; and Office of Children's Mental Health - Collective Impact. Before joining DHS, Hoelter served as the senior policy advisor to Gov. Scott Walker, advising the Governor on issues related to Public Instruction (DPI), Health Services (DHS), Children and Families (DCF), and Office of Commissioner of Insurance (OCI). Hoelter chaired the Governor's Read to Lead Development Council and led the National Governors Association Health Workforce Policy Academy for Wisconsin. Prior to joining Walker's staff in 2013, Hoelter served nearly three years in the Washington, D.C. office of Wisconsin Congressman Sean Duffy. Hoelter became senior legislative assistant, specializing in health care issues and staffing Congressman Duffy on the House Committee on the Budget.

Jon can be contacted at [jhoelter@wha.org](mailto:jhoelter@wha.org).

Kari can be contacted at [khofer@wha.org](mailto:khofer@wha.org) or call 608-274-1820.

## Nominating Committee Report

The Partners Nominating Committee is seeking a person who is interested in the treasurer position for the 2019-2020 term. Partners Bylaw 10.1.8 Article VIII Section 3 states the following: "No officer shall be elected without having served on the Board for one year." Please consider this position if you meet the requirement.

Bonnie Olson, Nominating Committee Chair  
715-834-1320 (H); 715-379-6797 (C)  
Email: [bonnie.o.ppowhwa@gmail.com](mailto:bonnie.o.ppowhwa@gmail.com)

## Public Policy Education Report



Barb Filla

As we patiently wait for spring revival and refresh of the earth and ourselves—and then the beautiful blue sky and sunshine of summer, our anticipation is high and we'll experience special joy, gratitude, even bigger smiles!

So what other future issues are there to think about, work on, and plan for now? Here is an important item for your consideration: WHA's **physician regulatory burden** agenda as a physician "top-of-license" agenda. This is one of WHA's 2018 goals, which has two elements that would improve patient care and outcomes by reducing the regulatory burden of physicians and the lower cost of health care. Regulatory burden is kind of 'behind the scenes' to us consumers and patients, but it is time-taking and costly. Two quotes from the April 6, 2018 *Valued Voice* newsletter on some of problematic areas:

1. **On cost:** "It is important to work to hold government accountable for the implementation costs to organizations and physicians when government imposes new requirements on the delivery of health care."
2. **On time taken away from patient care:** "Regulatory burden translates into an electronic health record (EHR) burden for physicians. We need to address the two to four additional hours of EHR burden on physicians each day."

As an auditor, CPA in/with hospitals and Medicare/Medicaid, I've been involved in seeing/working with these onerous government requirements. One example: When Medicare started in 1966, there were 476 codes to obtain reimbursement for services. Now there are over 14,000 and the 'exact proper code' must be indicated or partial or no payment is received for services performed.

Please see the April 6 issue of *The Valued Voice* article for more discussion not shared here and seek more information, as it directly affects everyone of us now or will in the future—the quality of care we as consumers obtain, sustaining financially sound hospitals and health care service providers, physician and medical expert services.

You are important, and you have an important role in making things better in health care with Partners of WHA!

Barb Filla, PPE Chair

4511 E. Robin Meadows Lane, Eau Claire, WI 54701  
715-514-0904

Email: [1bluebird88@gmail.com](mailto:1bluebird88@gmail.com)

## Community Health Education Report



*Sherry Jelic*

I have written about the opioid epidemic affecting communities, families, young people, pregnant women, and newborn babies. More focus has recently been put on opioid use among senior citizens. Prescription opioid use among older adults seems to point to growing problems of abuse and overdose.

Despite lots of information on opioid abuse, we know very little about it among older adults because studies either do not include older adults or older adults are grouped with other age groups. Due to concerns of undertreating pain, early research tended to downplay the risk of addiction in older adults and in 2009 the American Geriatric Society (AGS) came out in favor of prescribing opioids, suggesting that older adults were at less risk of addiction to opioid medications. (No longer in use.) It seems providers are still prescribing opioids at higher rates than in previous decades. In 2016, one out of three Medicare beneficiaries received an opioid prescription.

Older adults ARE at risk of overdose and abuse. They come in the form of legal prescriptions. Long term use of opioid pain medications, such as oxycodone and fentanyl—which is administered through an adhesive patch—are prescribed for chronic conditions such as disc degeneration or low back pain, fibromyalgia, headache, or arthritis. Dependence develops from long term use and the person may need more of the medication or higher dosing. Overdoses of these prescribed drugs can be as harmful as those from heroin. The number of seniors hospitalized for opioid overdoses has increased five-fold over the last 20 years.

Friends and family members should be aware of some issues that can occur with seniors:

- Some have filled their prescription for opioid drugs for decades. Now with the new prescribing regulations, they find themselves alone and desperate, and may become anxious or depressed.
- Older adults are more prone to falls, broken bones, and cognitive impairment. Taking opioids may jeopardize balance and increase these risks.
- The person takes more of the opioid medication than prescribed due to forgetfulness.
- Older adults with multiple medical conditions may inadvertently receive multiple interacting prescriptions from multiple doctors. This can cause enhanced effects of some medications such as those prescribed for pain, sleep, or anxiety and result in overdose.

It is important to note that many seniors do receive the appropriate amount of prescriptions for painkillers. Pain medications can be useful short-term while recovering from surgery or after an acute injury. But using opioid drugs for a more extended period, such as beyond 12 weeks, places people at a much higher risk of addiction.

In summary, know what is being taken, ask if there are other therapies that will help with the medical issue, and secure opioid prescriptions. Then dispose of unused medication.

**National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is April 28, 2018.**

*Sherry Jelic, CHE Chair*  
608-235-9526  
Email: [sjelic@msn.com](mailto:sjelic@msn.com)

### Dues Bills Are Out

Thank you for continuing to support your volunteers through membership in Partners of WHA. Each member organization pays \$1.25 per individual to support the Partners programming, especially Spring Tour and Convention. The Community Health Education Chair provides information regarding the health topic. The Public Policy Education Chair keeps members aware of critical public policy information as it comes up. The Spring Tour and Convention teams work hard to bring educational topics to help volunteers do better work to support the health of their communities.

Bills for dues were mailed recently to each local president. They are based on the number of members submitted on the President's Report. The president can verify the number and then forward the bill for payment to the responsible individual. To be eligible for Honor Points, the dues payment must be received by June 1.

If you have any questions, please contact Peg Larson, Treasurer, at [pegvoluntr@hotmail.com](mailto:pegvoluntr@hotmail.com) or 920-420-1482. Thank you.

## Around the State

### Essentia Health St. Mary's Hospital Auxiliary, Superior:

The Koffee Knook has sandwiches that are made in their hospital's kitchen, as well as breakfast sandwiches any time of the day. Their special is a breakfast sandwich and a cup of coffee for only \$2.75. Now that's a deal!

### Partners with Marshfield Medical Center, Marshfield:

A new candle line from Magnolia Home, which is part of the HGTV show "Fixer Upper" is now available in their gift shop. New items for the geranium and herb sale will include ivy and spikes.

### St. Joseph's Hospital Volunteers, West Bend:

Volunteers have a new comfort dog program. The program features Rhoda, a trained dog, who with her handler provides comfort to patients and outpatients. Rhoda is a certified comfort dog through the Lutheran Church Charities K-9 Comfort Dog Program.

### Aspirus Medford Volunteers, Medford:

On Valentine's Day, volunteers visited Aspirus Care and Rehab residents and Country Gardens tenants, taking them a homemade Valentine's card along with a mini candy bar. Ninety people were seen with very happy smiles.

### HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital Volunteer Partners, Eau Claire:

"Paws for a Cause" is a new fundraiser that's been started. For a \$5.00 donation, members of the community could have a light on a specially designated tree in the front of the hospital for their pet. Donations benefited Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire counties' food pantries, which included 1,564 pounds of dog and cat food.

*Kay Lyndahl, Editor*

## Best of the Best Award Nominations Deadline Changed

June 8, 2018 is the new deadline for nominations for the Best of the Best Award. If you do not have the forms to submit, they can be found at [www.partnersofwha.org](http://www.partnersofwha.org). This is to nominate your on-site administrator of a Wisconsin hospital who demonstrates a cooperative, supportive, enthusiastic, and well-defined relationship with his or her volunteer organization.

The 2018 Committee includes the 2016 award winner, Edward H. Wolf, chief administrative officer of Marshfield Hospital and Clinics; Dawn Hansen, Hartford; Arletta Trejo, Beaver Dam; Cindy Hermel, Wausau; and Mary Lou Bausch, Lancaster.

If you have questions, please contact me.

*Mary Lou Bausch, Chair*  
6224 State Road 35 and 81, Lancaster, WI 53813  
608-723-7165 (H); 608-778-0491 (C)  
Email: [pt4u@chorus.net](mailto:pt4u@chorus.net)

*Talent gives us gifts to share.  
It's good to be wise and wise to be good.  
Everyone makes mistakes, but cowards hide from them.  
Nothing is ever lost by courtesy.*

## Reaching Out Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
August 2018	Sun., July 15, 2018
November 2018	Fri., October 12, 2018
February 2019	Mon., January 14, 2019
May 2019	Sat., April 13, 2019

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*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@aol.com](mailto:kaylyndahl@aol.com)