

THE  
VOLUNTEER  
PARTNERS OF  
HSHS ST.  
JOSEPH'S  
HOSPITAL

# Stethoscope

VOLUME XXXVII, ISSUE I

WINTER 2021



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## *Partners 51st Birthday Luncheon*



**Save the date for April 14th, 2021**

We are excited to be celebrating another year with Partners! Since we were not able to appropriately celebrate last year we are hoping to make this year twice as fun. We are currently discussing options of having a virtual luncheon or an in-person luncheon. Once arrangements for the luncheon are made you will be informed via email or phone call. The luncheon will include a business meeting, a word from our CEO, Partners President, and other council members. We look forward to seeing all of you one way or another.

*Jessica Erickson-Michels  
Special Events Chair*

## Letter from HSHS WWD President and CEO

Dear Volunteer Partners,

Goodbye 2020! Never, in recent history, have we been so happy to see the end of a year and the beginning of anew.

I want to send my condolences to anyone who has experienced pain or loss because of COVID-19. It seems we've all been touched in one way or another, but none as much as those who have lost loved ones. Our hearts and prayers are with you.

The year has been a tough one, but during times of adversity we often experience the uplifting nature of helpers – those who find a way to bring joy. Our colleagues have received an outpouring of support since March. Local businesses have donated food, masks, hand sanitizer and other goods. Local residents have made hundreds and hundreds of masks for our colleagues and patients. And YOU have offered to volunteer through this pandemic to make sure our patients received the friendly care they need and deserve. Our COVID restrictions changed seemingly from week to week, but when we were able to welcome you back into the hospital, you were there waiting. We can't say thank you enough.

Although we were unable to host many events planned for 2020, you blessed us in December with the beautiful Love Lights event. Although we weren't able to host the program exactly like in years past, we have received amazing feedback. Our community appreciated the opportunity to remember their loved ones any way that was appropriate and safe. It is clear that the mission of the Sisters is in your heart.

And now, after nine trying months, there is hope. Our colleagues began receiving the COVID-19 vaccine before Christmas. They were elated. Many were emotional. Our colleagues have seen so much, and many have expressed that this is the light at the end of the tunnel.

As always, thank you for your dedication to our hospital. You reveal and embody Christ's healing love for all people through our high quality Franciscan health care ministry, and we couldn't be more thankful. Our hospital continues to be a warm and welcoming place because of you. Thank you!



Sincerely,

*John Wagner  
President and CEO  
HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital*

## *Happy New Year from Our Partners President*

Dear Partner Members,

Happy New Year!! We can finally say goodbye to 2020:) With the COVID vaccine being distributed, there is light at the end of the tunnel! Most of us have COVID fatigue and we can not wait to go to stores and restaurants, attend church services, and especially hug our loved ones. We are hopeful that we have turned the corner and we can resume in person events. Please know that you are missed!

While the in person Love Lights Ceremony was cancelled, a virtual Love Lights Ceremony was held on December 3. With a beautiful sunset in the background, Dianne Fish and some of her family members lit the trees in memory of her beloved husband Dave Fish. As the former CEO of St. Joseph's, Dave was a tireless advocate of St. Joseph's Hospital and a friend to each of the colleagues. The Love Lights ceremony continues to be a beautiful way to remember and honor our loved ones. A huge THANK YOU goes to Kay Engebretson. Kay does an amazing job as the Love Lights Chair. And THANK YOU to Father John Schultz who presided over the Love Lights Ceremony. Also congratulations to Father Schultz who recently celebrated the 55th Anniversary of his Ordination.

As Volunteer Partners, we are blessed to be a part of St. Joseph's Hospital. This past year has been stressful for all of us, but especially those in health care. A huge THANK YOU goes to each of the St. Joseph's Colleagues as they continue to provide excellent health care in a safe and secure environment. A little over a year ago, John Wagner, came to St. Joseph's Hospital as CEO. THANK YOU John for your leadership during a challenging year. Also thank you for your support of Partners over the past year. And finally a big THANK YOU goes to Brandy Sikora who is the Manager of Volunteer Services. She supports the volunteer groups at St. Joseph and Sacred Heart Hospitals. Our events are successful (and fun) in large part because of Brandy's expertise and energy!

As we cautiously navigate through the first few months of 2021, the Partners' Council will continue to plan for our events. Updates on the events will be in the quarterly Stethoscopes. There will be much to celebrate when we are finally able to meet in person. Until then, on behalf of the Partners Council, THANK YOU for your support of the Volunteer Partners of St. Joseph's Hospital. Stay well and God bless.

*Mary Rose Willi  
Partners President  
HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital*





## *Love Lights: The Trees of Honor and Remembrance*

We have concluded another successful fundraiser - The Love Lights. Amidst this pandemic year, we were able to do this project. All funds raised go to support the projects of Partners of HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital. Thank you to all who supported this program.

While we were unable to have our in person, traditional Remembrance Service in the Chapel and the outdoor lighting ceremony, a virtual program and lighting was available through the Hospital Facebook page. After a wonderful welcoming by Partners President, Mary Rose Willi, poems and scriptures were read. The lighting ceremony took place in the Healing Garden. After a blessing of the trees Diane Fish and family lit the trees with a beautiful backdrop of the pink sunset. The ceremony concluded with the singing of Silent Night by hospital colleague, Alyssa Van Duyse.

*Kay Engebretson  
Love Lights Chair*



## Public Policy: Save the Date Advocacy Day April 14, 2021

As I write this it is the middle of December. Much is still in flux. Hopefully, by mid January when you are reading this some resolutions will be in place.

Congress is still negotiating the next phase of Covid relief. It is tied to the end of year spending bill, so needs to be approved or the government will run out of money and shut down. Senate leader McConnell has stated the senate will stay in session until the bill is passed. One time check of most likely \$600 and a Federal unemployment boost of \$300/week are part of the proposed benefits.

UPDATE:12/21/20

Congress passed the long awaited second Covid relief bill in a last minute vote on December 20th.  
Highlights:

\$600 direct payments to individuals

\$300/week federal boost to unemployment benefits

Additional 284 billion dollars for the Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP) for small businesses.

69 billion for vaccine procurement, distribution, testing and funding for providers and mental health

54 billion for schools elementary through university

25 billion for first ever federal rental assistance program

Also included are monies for food banks, and supplemental food aid, farmers and child care services.

Joe Biden is the president elect. He received 320 electoral vote when the electoral college met on December 14th. Usually a non-event, it had a lot of coverage this year. The runoff election for 2 senate seats in Georgia will determine which party controls the senate. If the Democrats win both seats, the make up will be 50-50 with the vice president to cast a vote to break any ties. Republicans need to win one seat to retain control.

Distribution has begun for another 24.5 billion provider relief funding dollars from last Spring's CARES Act. Wisconsin's share is 225 million. This will go to 893 Wisconsin providers. No breakdown of the distribution has been announced.

An agreement was reached on Surprise Billing legislation. It is included in the end of year spending bill and passed as part of the Covid relief bill. Health care providers and insurers have 30 days to work out disagreements in out-of-network payment disputes. Next step is binding arbitration from a neutral 3rd party. The patient will not be billed more than they would pay for an in-network provider.

CMS final rule has included 60 additional telehealth services that will be covered beyond the conclusion of the public health emergency.

Please, mark your calendars! April 14 is Advocacy Day. The event will be virtual this year, but includes great speakers and the opportunity for a virtual meeting with our elected representatives.

Keynote speaker is Frank Sesno and internationally-recognized journalist who has covered the White House and been a talk show host with CNN. There is no cost, but you must register to attend. Registration opens after the new year. Check out [WHA.org](http://WHA.org) for updates and more information.

Julie Clark  
PPE Chair



## Chippewa Valley Memory Café



### 2021 Virtual Time Travelers Series

A Collaboration of the Chippewa Valley Museum and the ADRC

2nd Tuesday of each month  
10:00 am to 11:30 am

Register on line at [www.adrcevents.org](http://www.adrcevents.org) or call the ADRC at 715-839-4735. Once registered you will receive an email with the link to join.

Join us as we go back in time to explore how those in the past lived, worked and played in the Chippewa Valley. This group is open to anyone that is interested; as well as caregivers and those living with memory loss.

*Anne Sadowska  
Chair*

### Health and Safety

The year 2020 has become known as the year of the masks. Hopefully we are all following CDC recommendations and wearing them. Covid has not been kind to any of us. It has kept us out of the Shopping Malls, restaurants and away from our loved ones. It has been stressful and disheartening to not be able to celebrate special events with those close to us. Together we will get through this. Instead of getting together in person make a special phone call or you can do a video chat.

We don't need to go shopping or out to eat but we do need to have groceries. Make out a list, call the grocery store and you can either do a pick up or have them delivered to your home. If you are tired of cooking and feel the need for restaurant foods, call them and do a pick up. HOME is the new safe place at this time. In the next couple of months, please continue to wear masks and socially distance. We need to protect ourselves and others from this virus. 2021 will hopefully promise us a much better year and we all will be able to leave our homes once again. Healthcare workers at HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital have started receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, which shows that there is light at the end of the tunnel for all of us.

*Pat Bertrand  
Community Education*



### Partners Walking Club

We have been fortunate to have such a mild winter so far and therefore the Partners Walking Club remains steady. We continue to meet every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. We have between 8 to 10 walkers that show up on a regular basis.

Due to COVID-19 restriction we are no longer able to use the YMCA. When weather permits we meet in Irvine Park at the Duck Pond. If the weather becomes unsuitable or dangerous for walking, we will not walk that day.

I would like to invite more of you to join us. It is a great way to socialize and take care of your body at the same time!

*Dianne Fish  
Walking Club Chair*

## Scholarships

The Volunteer Partners of HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital are currently accepting applications for its 2021 scholarship awards. The Volunteer Partners are pleased to be able to award 6 scholarships of \$1000 each. The scholarship is a one-time non-renewable award to a person who fits the Scholarship Guidelines. Previous winners may not apply again.

An applicant must:

- Be a high school graduate, become a high school graduate in spring 2021, or have earned a GED.
- Be accepted and enrolled in a human health-care field at an accredited post-secondary school.
- Have a permanent address within Chippewa County

OR

- Be an employee, child, or spouse of an employee of
  - St. Joseph's Hospital
  - Sacred Heart Hospital\*
  - Prevea Clinics serving the Chippewa Valley
  - Credentialed Providers at St. Joseph's Hospital

\*Employee must maintain a minimum of 20 hours per week at St. Joseph's Hospital

- Submissions should include, per Scholarship Guidelines:
  - Application
  - Personal Statement
  - Two Letters of Reference
  - Grade Transcript

Application forms and Scholarship Guidelines may be obtained  
On the HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital website [www.stjoeschipfalls.com](http://www.stjoeschipfalls.com)

Or by contacting:

The Volunteer Office, HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital  
2661 County Highway I Chippewa Falls, WI 54729  
Telephone 715-717-7439



Completed applications must be postmarked on or before April 1, 2021, to be considered. Successful applicants will be notified by mail no later than May 31, 2021. Awards will be presented at the Partners General Luncheon Meeting on July 8, 2020.

*Jan Docksey*  
Chairman

## *Volunteer Services*

A new year is upon us and I am excited to close the door on 2020 and welcome in 2021. What a year 2020 was! I just remember the end of 2019 and how everyone couldn't wait for the new decade to take us to new beginnings. The excitement of the New Year came and shortly thereafter it went. This year has brought on many challenges for everyone but I like to focus on the great things that came about this year. I was able to spend more time with my husband and kids this year. We have always been a very busy family. My husband and I both work a second part-time job and our kids are in multiple sports. It was nice to sit around the table and play cards, have meals together again and focus on each other and be in the moment instead of always looking at what the next couple days' events will be and passing each other in the garage as we say drive safe and see you when I see you! It will be nice to get back to a new normal; seeing my kids play their sports again and living their childhood experiences, having ALL volunteers back to the hospitals, seeing visitors again roaming the halls, and being able to just give hugs again without worrying!

I know it was a tough year for the volunteers. Many were not able to return for fear of becoming sick and those that did were faced with concerns with each shift they worked. I respect each and every one of you in the choices that you had to make this year. The colleagues were very grateful for those that stayed during the pandemic and I know that as more of you return, they will appreciate your time and dedication to them and the hospital.

I walked in my office this morning and saw a penny on the floor. I picked it up and placed it on my desk where I will see it every day as a reminder. They say a penny found is a message from heaven and I want to believe that my grandma was sending me a message today to let me know that all will be ok and that 2021 will bring new adventures (hopefully good ones!) and a more peaceful year.

I hope you all had a blessed Holiday Season and Cheers to 2021!



*Brandy Sikora  
Volunteer Services*

## *Memorial*

A \$25 memorial was sent to the St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation in honor of a dedicated and long-time Partner Bev Severn.

*Marge Geissler  
Treasurer*

## *Gift Shop*

The Holiday season was a lot different this year but the colleagues and volunteers really supported the shop and our sales were amazing for December. Despite not being able to have the foot traffic like normal during the Holiday season, we still brought in approximately \$6000 in sales! This is still down from last year but considering the circumstances, it was great! The hot items this year was anything GNOME! Cardinals were also a big hit but that tends to be a yearly thing as people tend to remember their loved ones during the season.

We are all looking forward to bringing on a new year and when we can see you all back in the shop!

*Brandy Sikora  
Volunteer Services*

## *Membership*

We are always looking for new members, so please invite your friends, family, or neighbors to join the Partners of HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital. Cost to join Partners is \$10 a year or \$100 for a lifetime membership. If you are interested in learning more or joining, please contact Brandy Sikora.

*Jan Horan  
Membership Chair*

## *Linen, Sheet & Blanket Sale*

This year's Linen and Blanket sale conducted online orders November 6-12 with pick-up at the hospital. We netted \$267.44 from the sale. It's been an extraordinary year and we appreciate your support. Thank you.

*Marge Geissler  
Chair*



## Upcoming Dates

December 25	Merry Christmas!	
January 1	Happy New Year!	
January 10	Community Health Assessment Survey Deadline	
April 1	Scholarship Deadline	
April 14	Advocacy Day	Virtual
April 14	51st Birthday Celebration	TBD

~ A little progress each day adds up to big results. ~