



# CAPNOTES

A Publication of The Wisconsin Association of Licensed Practical Nurses

October 2020

WALPN

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## President's Message

On behalf of the Wisconsin Association of Licensed practical Nurses, I would like to send out greetings of positivity, hope, and health. If you, or anyone you know has contracted Covid-19, we are sending them prayers, daily!

Licensed Practical Nurse have stepped up to this challenge, and are on the front lines of caring for ALL that are in need. I am so proud of each of the Wisconsin LPNs, who are thinking of others, rather than themselves. BRAVO!!!!

The WALPN Executive Board of Directors is working hard to set up the 2021 WALPN Annual Conference. As you know, due to Covid-19 WALPN had to cancel the 2020 Conference, which was not an easy choice. However, for the safety of our LPNs, we made that tough decision to wait until 2021 to try again. We hope that every LPN in Wisconsin will support us by attending this upcoming conference. Details will be in the February Capnotes, and soon on our website [www.walpn.org](http://www.walpn.org).

**I am asking that you all VOTE in this upcoming election. Voting is important!**

**In this issue of Capnotes, our WALPN Legislation Committee Chairperson (Carolyn Kaiser) has provided YOU information to research your choices. Please take advantage of this opportunity to learn, and then vote.**

As always, I am available to ANY LPN, if you have questions about your profession, or your professional organization, the National Association of Licensed Practical Nurses/Wisconsin Association of Licensed Practical Nurses. Remember when you join NALPN, you are automatically a member of WALPN (Chapter State of NALPN).

Sincerely,  
JoAnn Shaw WALPN President  
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## Upcoming Events

October 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2020	Capnotes sent out to WALPN Members
January 2 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	Send articles for Capnotes to WALPN office
February 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	Capnotes sent out (Conference Information)
May 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2021 @ 1pm	WALPN Executive Committee Meeting @ Clarion Hotel, Wisconsin Dells
May 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2021 @ 3pm	WALPN Executive Board Meeting @ Clarion Hotel, Wisconsin Dells
May 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2021 @ 5pm – 7pm	Meet & Greet Sponsored by WALPN Conference Registration/Vendor Set-up
May 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2021 @ 7:45am	WALPN Annual Conference Registration, Bazaar, and Vendors open
May 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2021 @ 8:15am	70 <sup>th</sup> Annual Conference begins "W.A.L.P.N CELEBRATES 70 YEARS"
May 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2020	Following the adjournment of the Conference; WALPN Executive Committee/Board to meet
May 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	Send Articles for Capnotes to WALPN office
June 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	Capnotes sent out to WALPN members

## **\*We Want to Hear From You...**

Here is your opportunity to tell us about you, what you are doing for LPNs, and what part of the community are you benefitting! Submit an article, photo with caption, or story for consideration into the next edition of Capnotes. This publication is for you...let's use your story to inspire us all.

*Submissions must be received by January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021.. Submit to [walpnorg@gmail.com](mailto:walpnorg@gmail.com) for consideration.*

### **Submitted by Debbie Blahnik:**

My name is Debbie Blahnik. I am a newly elected director on the WALPN board. I started my nursing career as a CNA after I graduated high school. The only CNA jobs available were in long term care facilities. I did not want to work in a nursing home, so I chose to work in a factory. I was starting my family and needed a job right away. I worked at the factory for 38 years. While working at the factory for 34 years, I received an opportunity to go back to school. Now that I was older and wiser, I thought, this is my chance to go back to school and pursue my nursing career further.

I decided I wanted to be an LPN. I needed to take the CNA course again because of the many changes. While I was working full time in the factory, I was going to school in the evening and working every other weekend as a CNA, to keep my skills up and feel more confident when I became an LPN. It definitely was not "a walk in the park" for me, With all the support of my family, instructors, classmates and knowledge that JoAnn Shaw shared with me at my college, I was determined to finish something in my life and be the best LPN I could be!!

I graduated in May 2019 and passed my NLEX in June 2019, at 57 years old. I started my LPN career in the Cancer Center at a local hospital. The hospital was not utilizing my abilities as an LPN. As a new member of the WALPN, I asked President JoAnn Shaw for advice of how I could change this for me in the hospital. I was not satisfied with my career at the hospital, so I chose to move on to a new facility that could give me what I was looking for in my career. Had I not been introduced to JoAnn Shaw and the WALPN, I wonder how much I would know today about my LPN career.

I currently work full time for Bellin Heath as a float nurse in Family Practice. Also, I am an Independent Nurse and take care of a young lady who is non-verbal, vent and trach dependent. I LOVE MY LPN CAREER!

WALPN/NALPN gives us the opportunity to know about our scope of practice and keeps us up to date. We can earn certifications such as Gerontology, Mental Health First Aid, IV Therapy, etc.

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### **Submitted by Marcie Nytes:**

Hello, My name is Marcie Nytes, LPN COHC WCF. I have been working in Occupational Health since June 2017 and enjoy what I do. I am a Certified Occupational Hearing Conservationist and perform many audiometric tests for our patients on a daily basis. I am NIOSH certified as well to perform Respiratory Pulmonary Function testing as well as fitting patients with N95 masks and respirators. I have also recently been trained as a Work Compensation Facilitator to reach out to our injured employees and connect with them to make sure that they are getting the proper care so they can get back to working their regular job duties as soon as possible. I also work in LTC every other weekend as well in a local nursing home and work casual for a healthcare staffing agency.

Two years ago I was elected as a Director of the Executive Board for my local chapter of WALPN which has helped me gain leadership skills and increase my confidence in my abilities as a nurse. At our last our Executive Board meeting on September 28, 2020 I was honored to accept the Vice President position for the WALPN. I have enjoyed working with our Executive Board and have wonderful mentors. My next step is to apply for the LPN seat on the Wisconsin Board of Nursing for the 2021/22 term.

In my spare time I enjoy participating in local events such as the Walk for a Cure for Alzheimer's Disease to help raise awareness of this terrible disease. I have participated in this walk in my local community the past 2 years in a row and also volunteered last year with our local haunted house The Dominion of Terror as a member of the medical team (HRT).

I was given the opportunity to attend the NALPN 70th Annual Conference in Biloxi, Mississippi in October 2019. The conference was very educational, offered the opportunity to network with many other LPN's from around the country and included some fun events.

We participated in learning sessions that provided 6 CEU's on: Identifying the Nurse Leader in You, Advances in Pulmonary Hypertension, Support Surfaces (Wound Care and Effects of Change in Wound Conditions), Care of the HIV Patient and Role of the LPN in Leadership. As well as, having Vitas present Palliative Care & Pain Management in the Midst of the Opioid Epidemic. Other fun offerings between learning sessions included the availability of a photographer to have Professional Headshots taken, the 1st line crossing of the new members of

the Lambda Psi Nu, the only sorority for LPN's.

We enjoyed a beautiful night on the Gulf of Mississippi participating in a group Sunset Dinner Cruise on one of the last existing original Paddle Boats; which included a dinner prepared by a hibachi chef on the cruise, live and recorded music which many in the group enjoyed, line dancing together. The last night of the conference concluded with a black formal Gala and Dinner Banquet.

I strongly suggest that LPN's join this Professional Organization for all LPN's around the country. All of the opportunities for furthering your education and networking is well worth the cost.

Respectfully submitted by Marcie Nytes, LPN (WALPN Vice President)

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## State News

Newly elected officers are announced:

Vice President: Marcie Nytes, Secretary (re-elected): Sue Gillett, Director: Mary Jo Brixius, Director: Debbie Blahnik. WALPN welcomes them to our team, for the good of the profession of Licensed Practical nurses in Wisconsin. Congratulations!!!

Plans for the Annual WALPN Conference is underway for May 2nd-3rd, 2021 (Sunday & Monday). This event will be held at the Clarion Hotel (formerly Wintergreen) in Wisconsin Dells. Room rates will be \$62 plus tax/night, and the Hotel will honor this rate if you come in 1 day early, or leave 1 day later. Make this a family event. Agenda for speakers is being worked on, and registration, along with agenda will be in the February issue of Capnotes, and also online at the WALPN website [walpn.org](http://walpn.org). Start recruiting LPNs that you know to attend.

WALPN will continue to ask our members, to collect toiletries from hotels. Many of us make trips, and use our own supplies, however there are so many people, who don't have the basic supplies. WALPN collects these items @ their Annual Conference, and June Bahr (longtime WALPN Member) distributes these items to the Homeless, Domestic Violence Centers, and High Schools. If you don't spend time in the hotels, you can purchase toiletries, and donate them. **Let's be generous to those less fortunate. Thank you in advance for helping WALPN to give back.**

WALPN is encouraging ALL, to go out to vote this year. Included in this issue of Capnotes will contain information from Carolyn Kaiser (WALPN Legislative Committee Chairperson). She will give you inform how to get accurate information on the candidates, to make an informed decision. **WALPN is not telling you who to vote for, just the need for you to VOTE!!!**

## National News

Newly Elected officers of NALPN were announced October 12th, 2020, by NALPN President, Debra Schultz:

Vice President: JoAnn Shaw, Secretary: DaShauna Taylor, Director: Tina Johnson, Director: Muriel Lightburn, Director: LeKathryn Gipson (to complete the 1 year term of Director left due to JoAnn Shaw taking Vice President seat). **WALPN sends congratulations to all of these ladies, and wish them success in their positions.**

The 71st Annual NALPN Conference, "LPNs/LVNs Empowered to Succeed" is being planned, by JoAnn Shaw (Conference Chairperson). Tentative plans are for October 17th-20th, 2021 @ the IP Casino Resort Biloxi, Mississippi. Awaiting confirmation from the hotel. This Conference will contain a Certification in Mental Health First Aide by Missy Moore RN. I have personally attended 3 of her Mental Health First Side courses, and can tell you that this course is the BEST, and MOST valuable course I have ever taken in my 47 years as an LPN. There will be 15 more CEU sessions at this event. Mark your calendars NOW!

New NALPN Bylaws have been completed, and will be emailed to all WALPN members in the next month. The BIG change is the membership cost (**no change for Wisconsin, as we are a Chapter State**). Here's the change:

ACTIVE Member: Any LPN/LVN, Military, International holding a current license or equivalent \$100

RETIRED Member: \$65

STUDENT Member: \$25

AFFILIATE Member: \$60

The change is being made soon, so we will have new paper application forms and, changes on the NALPN website [www.nalpn.org](http://www.nalpn.org).

NALPN Executive Board is working to get better operation of their NALPN Office.

## Legislative News

Health care employees are front line to see results of Legislative action/ inaction. Their actions affect you, your patients, and your family. Be an informed Voter. Dig deeper- be a fact finder -

LPN's are working hard often short staffed, working two jobs, mandated overtime, concerned about the safety of the patients, peers, and family. The load in life is busy, that said LPN's cannot forget the enormous impact the legislature has on our lives. Yes, LPN's need to continue to speak up. LPN's are part of an integral team of caregivers.

The WALPN Legislative committee is going to review some of the actions, non-actions of the Wisconsin legislators and share the status of health related bills in the current legislative session. This summary is to give you a guide and resources. WI Legislature details are on the web. WI Eye has audio/ video of floor actions. Legislative bills are introduced and referred to a committee. The goal would be to have a public hearing, so stakeholders and citizens can have an opportunity to voice whether in favor/ or against along with 'why.' The chair of the committee has a lot of power on whether a bill will move along.

Remember back to the 2019 WALPN conference when we passed resolutions? One was that Licensed Practical Nurses be utilized as per the Nurse Practice Act. One resolution was in regards to Certified Nurse Aid Protection Act. Copies of these resolutions were sent to all senators and assembly representatives. We recognized that staff shortages (reported 16,500 vacant positions), feel the root frustration for the patients as the staff is multitasking the call lights take longer to answer, people who are a risk for falls, get up on their own and fall, the need to explain an issue or new order from doctor to patient and/ or family, etc. In the back of your mind you know it is time for certain medication to be given, the Doctor is expecting a call back, and you are asked to help with a transport. Couple that for the staff with low pay, feeling of disrespect, and fear of not documenting something in a timely fashion.

We'll start with a little history regards to the certified nursing assistant. In 2008 Wisconsin Legislature passed a law that to be a certified nurse aid in WI, one would need to have 120 hours education. Nursing Leaders, Legislature, and citizens worked together with pride to accomplish the goal. Knowledge and quality care were a priority. For the past couple of sessions some legislators

had attempted to decrease education to 75 hours. In our few past a few legislators with power had a goal to decrease the educational hours; no matter what it might to the persons needing care or those giving care. Some employers supported the plan decrease education, but at what cost? Was quality staffing a priority or is it to have a 'count?' Then in this session along came Assembly Bill 76 with a goal to decrease CNA education from 120 hours to 75 hours with only 16 hours of clinical. The Republican controlled legislature passed it, Governor Evers's vetoed it. Gov. Evers stated in his veto that ... "I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to providing less training for those who are for our state's most vulnerable citizens. Research has shown that higher training standards result in better outcomes for patients, lower staff turnover, and higher job satisfaction." ... Disability Rights Wisconsin released a press release of their support of Governor Evers's veto. They too had concerns about long term consequences to diminish care and not necessarily result in a significant increase the CNA workforce.

Under Robin Vos, leadership a 'new' law was passed that legislature could 'try' to override a bill that had been vetoed again and again. The vote was taken but Vos and his team did NOT have enough votes to override the veto, so it died a second time. Then Covid-19 pandemic hit, under Rep. Vos leadership this issue was brought back again in April of 2020 when WI was under a deadline to get Federal funds under the CARES Act, monies we needed to help people affected by Covid-19. Assembly legislators were held hostage to these tactics, in order to get the CARES money, CNA education will be diminished.

Did you know that Assembly Bill 614 was introduced to create at least six (6) hours of training for employees prior to caring for persons with diagnosis of Alzheimer's or other dementia? This training would be mandatory when working in CBRFs, RCAC, home health agencies, support services, etc. Then each two (2) years employees would have at least 2 hours of training. It was referred to the Assembly Committee of Aging and Long-Term Care. Chair Rep. Rick Gundrum (AD 58) and Vice Chair Warren Petryk (AD 93) chose to allow this bill to die.

Since January of 2014, according the rules of the Affordable Care Act states were offered the option to expand eligibility for Medicaid Expansion, twenty-six states and Washington D.C. immediately invested. As of August 17, 2020 there are only 12 states who have not accepted. Wisconsin is one of those twelve. Wisconsin has lost billions of dollars in regards to this! In the budget proposal of 2018, Governor Evers had the expansion was in the language. It did not pass the legislature, we as Wisconsinites lost out on having

\$324,000.00 (this budget alone) of money that could have been used for other issues (mental health, long term care, and women's health) and 176,000 more Wisconsinites would have been covered. This was turned over to the Medicaid Reform and Oversight committee Chair Rob Summerfield (AD 67) and Vice Chair Rep. Robert Brooks (AB 60). They took no action, no public hearing, it went there to die...

Long term care has taken a big hit by the legislature not accepting these funds. Data from Leading Age tells us that closures of nursing homes in 2016-5, 2017:-9, 2018-5, 2019-17 and so far in 2020 5 as of request time. Leading Age states "some facilities are actively closing with final closure imminent." As you know when nursing homes close; families need to drive farther to visit, moving fragile people to unfamiliar surroundings is risky, closing also hurts economy of small towns, and the list goes on.

Look at the candidates with a keen eye. Do your own research, <https://legis.wisconsin.gov> many can 'talk the talk' but what action have they really taken? How accountable were the committee chairs to the taxpayer? How are they using their leadership positions? Have they spoke up and or voted to support the values that match your values? Do you email, call, or attend listening sessions to educate the legislators on issues that you are the expert on? November 3rd will coming soon.

To get familiar with your voting history/ voting future: <http://myvote.wi.gov> Use your address to check where you're polling location is. Review your ballot for candidates and possible referendums. Be an informed voter.

*WALPN Legislative Committee*

Where do I go for answers?

All health care providers need to be on 'their toes.' Often when an issue arises we think, "Where do I go to get that answer?" "How do I prove my point?" It is important to know where to look for answers.

There are laws, documents, and guides from the Board of Nursing along with your facility that guide your practice.

Legal:

WI Statue 441: Regulation of Nursing. The objectives for the LPN in Wisconsin are broad.

WI Administrative Code N6: Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses.

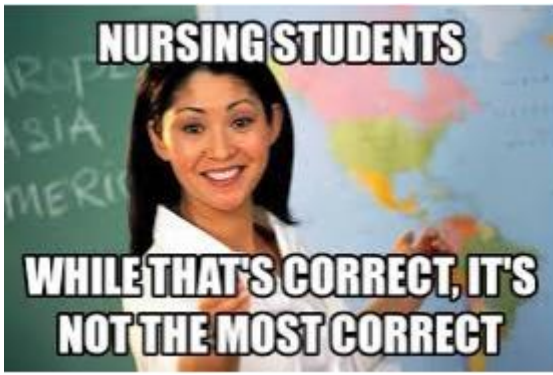
<http://dsps.wi.gov>: This is the web address to the home page of the Department of Safety and Professional Services. Once there you can go to board of nursing segment, register to listen in on board of nursing meetings (open session), you can read past minutes from board meetings, you can look up a license to see if current or if any limitations on it, you can find position papers that are current in board of nursing decisions, etc.

October 1, 2020 Governor Evers issued Emergency Order #2. It is titled Order to Aid in Healthcare Facilities to provide treatment to Wisconsinites impacted by Covid 19. That too is on the dsps.wi.gov site. The entire Emergency Order is also under Legislative Documents on the WALPN website ([www.walpn.org](http://www.walpn.org)).

The Board of Nursing--- that phrase we are all aware of when taking the state exam with a goal to be licensed. Once that accomplishment has been achieved, do we give it much thought? Is there a question of what they do? The long standing objective of the Board of Nursing is to "PROTECT THE PUBLIC." Wisconsin had had a strong history of promoting quality care. The Board is comprised of nine members: 5 RN's, 2 LPN's, and 2 public members. They serve staggered four year terms. Routine meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month @ 8:00AM. Currently during Covid; you can give public comment and listen to open sessions on the computer. There are numerous ways to contact the board: Letter: DSPS P.O. Box 8366 Madison, WI 53708-8366 Phone: 608-266-2112 Email: [dsps@wi.gov](mailto:dsps@wi.gov)

Each facility will have work rules. Review them to see what questions you have. Is the facility you work at utilizing the LPN as they should? Be on committees at the work site, keep alert. If you see an issue speak with leadership about how it could/ should be different. This is when statues, administrative codes, position papers will come in handy with your goal. These will help with updating job descriptions.

Then there is always your professional association! Wisconsin Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (WALPN). WALPN is an important and integral avenue to gain knowledge. LPNs work in a broad spectrum of work settings. Conferences are a great way to network and understand others roles. This is where you can also learn about National certifications which will also broaden your career opportunities.



#### **Membership/Publicity:**

\*\*Mary Jo Brixius, Sue Gillett

\*\*Denotes Chairperson

#### **WALPN Collects Donations**

The Wisconsin Association of Licensed Practical Nurses collects toiletries throughout the year, and donate them at their Annual Conferences, usually in April of each year.



#### **IMPORTANT NOTICE!!!**

WALPN/NALPN needs to know when you have a change in address, phone number or email. **IF YOU HAVE AN EMAIL, PLEASE BE SURE WALPN KNOWS**, this is the quickest and most cost-effective way to communicate, **AND WE ASSURE YOU WE DO NOT GIVE YOUR EMAILS OUT TO ANYONE.** We want you to receive all correspondence on upcoming issues which are important to each of you, however if we do not have this information, we cannot get this valuable information to you in a timely manner.

Thank You, WALPN Staff

#### **WALPN EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**President:** JoAnn Shaw 4510 Andrea Ct. Manitowoc, WI 54220  
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**Secretary:** Sue Gillett 2443 Hayden Ave. Altoona, WI 54720  
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**Director:** Debra Blahnik 9114 Reifs Mills Rd. Whitelaw, WI 54247  
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#### **WALPN Committees**

##### **Convention/Education:**

\*\*JoAnn Shaw, Marcie Nytes, Debra Blahnik, Mary Jo Brixius

##### **Finance/Fundraising:**

\*\*Carolyn Kaiser, Karen Kofka, Rita Dietsche

##### **Legislation/Bylaws:**

\*\*Marcie Nytes, Carolyn Kaiser, Bonnie Schindler

The above picture is a person accepting three bags of various toiletries, and dental products, which were delivered to the Beacon House in Fond du lac, WI. The Beacon House is a non-profit organization for women, and women with children, who are addicted to alcohol or drugs. It is a compassionate, professional group providing a safe home-like environment to those women in recovery. Because many women that come to the Beacon House come directly from jail, they come with absolutely NOTHING. These women have no personal items, like “good” smelling shampoo, conditioner, body lotion, toothbrush, floss, toothpaste, and more. These items are put together by the Beacon House, in a welcome kit for each of them on arrival. The staff member said, “they were very thankful and appreciative to the Wisconsin Association of Licensed Practical Nurses Organization for this contribution.

June Bahr LPN (WALPN Member) has headed up this task for WALPN, over the last 6 years, and will continue to collect these items, and distribute them to the less fortunate. **June says, “Thanks ladies, we did a good job”.**