

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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WHA Calendar:

**WHA CEO/
Trustee Spring
Meeting
Casper, WY** 5/19

**LeadingAge
Wyoming
Spring Meeting
Casper, WY** 5/17-
5/18

Other Events:

**AHA Annual
Meeting
Washington
DC** 5/7-
5/10



Sandy Ward, The Man in the Six Pictures By Stephen Dow of the Buffalo Bulletin

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words, but sometimes photos don't tell the whole story.

Consider, for example, Sandy Ward who has served as the CEO of the Johnson County Healthcare Center for the past 30 years.

When Marcy Schueler, director of marketing and public relations at the health care center, was recently asked to compile some photos taken of Ward during his tenure at the center, she could find only six – one for every five years he has worked there.

An outsider might interpret the lack of photos as an indication of Ward's lack of impact on the health care center. But the stories of center employees touched by Ward's kindness, vision and good business sense tell a very different story.

"People here could talk about Sandy all day," Schueler said. "Literally everybody at this center has a story or two or 10 about Sandy and how much he means to us. He's leaving an incredible legacy behind."



Ward will retire from the center March 31 to focus on fighting stage 4 salivary gland cancer. Nicole Hobbs, the physicians' services officer for West Park Hospital in Cody, will take over as administrator April 1. Depending on his health, Ward will continue working part time to help train Hobbs through 2017.

According to Schueler, Hobbs will have a tough act to follow. Not only has Ward kept the hospital on budget for three decades, he has also brought state-of-the-art medical equipment to the facility and overseen the addition of new surgical, birthing and emergency room facilities, along with renovations of the center's clinic and nursing home.

How do you recognize and pay tribute to a man like Sandy Ward? He has meant so much to his community, his facilities and to the associations that represent his organizations. I have known Sandy for many years and have had the good fortune to learn from him. He helped me as a young, brand new nursing home administrator and later he was there to help me as I took on the role of hospital CEO. Sandy has supported and served the WHA and was instrumental in starting the Quality Healthcare Foundation which later became LeadingAge Wyoming. I am blessed to be able to call Sandy my friend and will cherish our friendship forever. We found this feature article in the local paper in Buffalo and felt it was a fitting tribute to a great man. Congratulations Sandy on your retirement and on an incredible career. You leave behind an incredible legacy. Keep up the fight!





Sandy Ward Continued

once a week. For me, it was a big deal that that didn't happen."

Ward is also proud of spearheading the recent effort to build a new nursing home at the center. The completely renovated Amie Holt Care Center opened last summer.

"One of the biggest decisions I ever made was deciding whether we should stay in the nursing home business or get out," Ward said. "In the end, it was a decision I made not based on financial considerations, but the fact that this county needed a nursing home. If we shut down Amie Holt, local residents would have to go out of county for nursing home care. That meant that their children could only see them

Schueler said that she has learned a lot from Ward over the years. One of those things was how to be a servant.

"There was a time awhile ago when we were really low on CNAs," Schueler said. "Because of this, Sandy decided to receive CNA training so that he could fill in while we were trying to hire people.

As staff members reflected on Ward's love of chocolate and the time he pranked an employee by pretending to be a corpse, the fondness in their voices made it clear that they were no longer talking about their boss. They

were talking about a mentor. A friend. A father figure. Over 30 years, he has become like family to them.

According to Ward, the feeling is mutual.

"It's been a real honor and privilege to work at the health care center," Ward said. "Before I got sick, I truly loved going to work and looked forward to it every day because I have a tremendous number of friends up there. I think seeing them everyday is the thing I'll miss most when I retire. The staff have truly made this an unforgettable experience for me."



Don't forget to send us a story about your hospital so we can feature you in our Member Spotlight section!

June 9th #HAVhope Friday: A National Day of Awareness

The AHA Board of Trustees launched an association-wide initiative "Hospitals Against Violence" to focus on addressing violence within the hospital walls and in our communities.

To that end, June 9th has been designated as #HAVhope Friday: A National Day of Awareness to unite hospitals, health systems, nurses, doctors and other professionals from across the country, as well the

local and national organizations they work with, to focus national attention on ending violence through a digital media campaign.

Support only involves sharing photos of your colleagues and community supporters holding hands, along with a short description of your commitment to combating violence through social media using **#HAVhope**.

We're also asking you to **spread the word to your members** to encourage their

participation and support by signing up at www.aha.org/preventviolence.

For more information about **#HAVhope Friday** and the **Hospitals Against Violence** Initiative, please contact Laura Castellanos at lcastellanos@aha.org or visit their website at www.aha.org/PreventViolence.

Wyoming Hospital Association

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