

Fall 2021

INN TOUCH

The Management Magazine of Wisconsin's Lodging Professionals

**WHLA History:
Association
Leadership**

INTRODUCING:
**The New WHLA
Career Center**

**New Look & Website
for WHLA**



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Volume 44, Issue 3

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InnTouch is published quarterly by the Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association (WHLA). Through InnTouch and other programs, WHLA provides materials designed to improve members' professionalism. WHLA caters to the educational and professional needs of lodging professionals. A scholarship fund for students pursuing a career in the hospitality industry is sponsored by WHLA. For more information, or to make a donation to WHLA or its scholarship fund, email whla@wisconsinlodging.org.

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CHAIRMAN'S FORUM



Charlie Eggen has been active on WHLA's Board of Directors since 2016, serving as Chairman-Elect in 2020. He was awarded the WHLA Innkeeper of the Year Award in 2016. In addition to his service with WHLA, Eggen is active in many regional advisory boards and served as President of the Greater Madison Hotel & Lodging Association from 2014 – 2020.

As the Vice President of F&E Hospitality, Charlie oversees all aspects of sales and operations for the Holiday Inn Express Madison – Verona and the Fairfield Inn & Suites Madison Verona.

Dear WHLA Members,

Over the past year, our industry has continued to go through changes and growth. That is no different for our association. This summer brought exciting change for the Wisconsin Hotel and Lodging Association! With the introduction of a new logo and website in July, an office move in August, and the launch of the Career Center in September, WHLA has been working hard to ensure we are in a strong position to continue for another 125 years or more.

If you have not checked out the new website already, I encourage you to do so. The website was designed to provide visitors with an easy way to search for lodging accommodations, while allowing members more control over their account and benefits. Current members can now easily access members-only resources, register for events, update property information, and pay dues. The website also has great information for prospective members and makes it easier than ever for them to join. We hope that you find the new WisconsinLodging.org to be a great upgrade that puts heads in beds and delivers strong content for operating and managing your business.

While you're on the new website, there are two pages that I encourage you to check out. The first is the new WHLA Career Center where lodging members can post free job listings online until the end of the year. Learn more about the WHLA Career Center on page 8.

I'm excited to be celebrating the 125th anniversary of our organization at the Wisconsin Lodging Conference this year. The Education/Conference Committee has planned a great line-up of speakers and social events for the annual WHLA Conference at the Brookfield Conference Center from November 7 – 9, 2021. We look forward to honoring the stars of our industry at the annual Awards Luncheon on Monday. Also, for the first time this year we will be welcoming individuals into the Wisconsin Lodging Hall of Fame. This is sure to be a great event during a historic year for our organization!

I am proud of the work WHLA has done so far this year, and am grateful to you, our members, for your support in our efforts. Please be sure to take advantage of the services and resources available through your membership with WHLA.

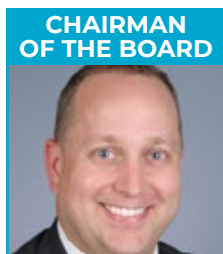
Thank you for your support of WHLA!

Sincerely,

Charlie Eggen
2021 WHLA Chairman of the Board
F & E Hospitality

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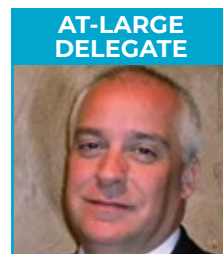
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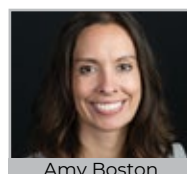
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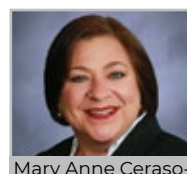
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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

With summer in our rearview mirror, I can't help but take a look back at all of the challenges and triumphs that our industry has been through since I started with WHLA a little over one year ago. You don't need me to tell you what the struggles are — continued fallout from COVID-19 being the overarching factor. From labor shortages, to the lack of business travel, to the threat of the Delta variant being held over us, I'm proud to work in such a resilient industry.

WHLA set three key legislative priorities at the turn of the year:

- 1) Passing COVID-19 liability protections
- 2) Protecting the state's tourism promotion budget
- 3) Passing the marketplace reform legislation

All three of these priorities have been achieved in large part because our membership has been engaged in communicating with elected officials about the importance of helping our industry. Wisconsin law now protects businesses, nonprofits, and schools from frivolous lawsuits related to COVID-19, the state budget fully funded the Department of Tourism as we had requested, and the marketplace reform package forces marketplace providers like Airbnb and VRBO to compete on a more level playing field. On top of these issues, WHLA advocated on a plethora of other topics — especially grant funding to keep lodging properties afloat during the crisis. Through the two statewide lodging grant programs, we've put about \$95 million in the hands of lodging operators around the state who have been struggling to keep their doors open for the past year and a half. I can say with a high level of certainty — these grant programs would not have happened without the hard work of WHLA.

On the non-legislative side, we've been quite busy this year retooling our operations and refreshing the look of WHLA. As you've likely noticed, we have a brand new logo and color scheme that looks great on our brand new website! The website gives members more control over their property listings, and it gives you more access to the content and resources that you depend on WHLA for. It also integrates with our backend systems, allowing you to register for conferences and webinars, send advocacy messages through our Action Center, and post jobs to our new Career Center. All of this went live over the last several months while staff was also busy packing up our offices to move to our new headquarters just down the road from this year's conference site in Brookfield.

All of these great triumphs for our organization came at a time when our industry was — and continues to be — in peril. A special thank you goes to our members, volunteer leaders, and our staff team for helping us advance our organization as we emerge from what are hopefully the darkest years our industry will ever see. We are hopeful and confident that all of these changes will help forge our path to a brighter future for Wisconsin's lodging industry.

Bill Elliott, CAE
WHLA President & CEO



MEET OUR TEAM

BILL ELLIOTT, CAE



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INTRODUCING...

The new WHLA Career Center!

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The number one issue we hear about from members continues to be the struggle to recruit more people into the hospitality workforce. That's why we are excited to connect lodging property members with employees through our new WHLA Career Center! With the official launch of the WHLA Career Center on September 8, we immediately began to receive postings to the job board from WHLA member properties across the state.

As an industry specific job board, the WHLA Career Center hosts only relevant résumés and job postings, making the process less saturated and easier to find both jobs and employees. Our new Career Center makes the job searching easy for job seekers to navigate, while giving our members the chance to share job openings and search for qualified candidates.

Job Seekers

The WHLA Career Center offers a comprehensive collection of job postings targeted to positions at hotel and lodging properties in Wisconsin. Job seekers can search for opportunities including guest services, housekeeping, food and beverage, administrative, sales, event planning, management, and more. Applicants can search jobs statewide and post their résumé in the résumé bank.

Employers

WHLA Members can enjoy complimentary 30, 60, or 90 day postings. Upgrades to featured postings have a small fee. Non-members are also charged to post openings in the Career Center. Creating and updating job listings is easy — be sure to refer to WHLA's Career Center Guide for step-by-step instructions.

Posting a position on the WHLA Career Center is a great way to expand your hiring efforts in the lodging industry. When you post a job, you also gain access to the résumé bank, allowing you to search through candidates who may be a great fit for your property. All applications, interviews, hiring decisions, etc., are between the employers and job applicants. Take advantage of your membership and use the WHLA Career Center for your next job opening.

Start exploring the Career Center at wisconsinlodging.mcjobboard.net/jobs.

The WHLA Career Center is available to all members and the public. Job seekers do not have to be WHLA members, and all functions of the job board are complimentary.

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WHLA members have access to a low cost subscription through WageWatch to help with rehiring and budgeting. Visit www.wagewatch.com to set up an account and be sure to use the WHLA discount code available at web.wisconsinlodging.org/coupons. Once you have submitted your wage data, you will have immediate access to run reports with 2021 data.

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New Look & Website for WHLA

Our organizational profile has grown and evolved over the last 125 years, and to commemorate the historic year, we have unveiled our new logo and brand identity. Inspired by the organization's longevity and dynamic nature, the modernized look will better represent our values and outlook for the future. The new logo can be seen anywhere we are in public — like our website, social media pages, publications, and more. In addition to the main logo redesign, primary, secondary, and tertiary logos were created, along with brand guidelines to ensure consistency in use.

"While our name remains the same, our logo and website have changed significantly to better serve our members and travelers," commented WHLA

President & CEO Bill Elliott. "The new branding emphasizes our desire and ability to evolve as an organization and an industry, while paying homage to our strong history."

"The new branding emphasizes our desire and ability to evolve as an organization and an industry, while paying homage to our strong history."

Since our founding in 1896, the look and logo has evolved with the association. In addition to the name of our organization changing five times since our founding, the logo has changed

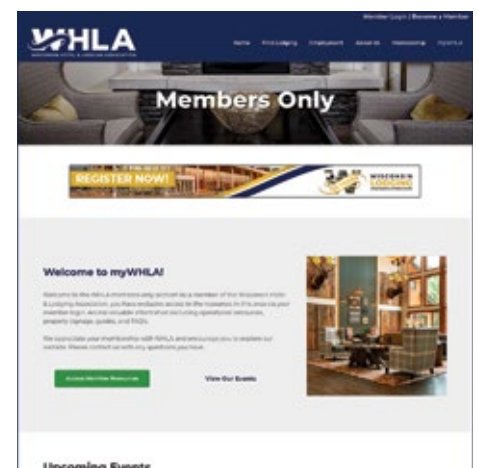
and evolved throughout the years. The Website & Branding Task Force was created by the Board of Directors in late 2020. Connie Barbian from Connect Hospitality Solutions was

selected as the task force chair. Staff liaison and designer Lexie Mallary worked with the task force to evaluate the current logo and its challenges, develop various logo options for multi-

Have you visited our new website yet?

Start exploring our new member section at WisconsinLodging.org/mywhla.

Contact communication@wisconsinlodging.org if you have not already set up your login credentials.



use formats, and create a unified color palette for consistent usage. Throughout the course of the project, WHLA met with Brigitte Breitenbach from B&Co. to receive feedback on the designs. This redesign also came with the removal of the ampersand (&) from WHLA's initials to modernize our name, visuals, and wide-scale recognition.

"The new visual identity communicates WHLA's history and strengths, as the association continues to evolve," Lexie Mallary said. She continued, "The updated branding is a nod to the longevity of the association, as the logo subtly captures the inclusive and dynamic nature of the lodging industry in Wisconsin and WHLA's ability to adapt over time."

Ahead of the launch, WHLA members were given the opportunity to login to the new Member Portal to update their membership information and add photos to their profile for their online directory listing.

The new logo was rolled out with our updated website on July 29, 2021. The upgraded website was introduced at

WisconsinLodging.org to reflect the new brand identity and showcase the offerings of WHLA member properties and companies. The traveler experience is still at the forefront of the website, allowing travelers to search for hotel and lodging accommodations in the state, view travel offers, and more. It features easy-to-navigate pages, while providing members more control over their information and services. The site also better highlights the full suite of services WHLA offers to members including industry advocacy, operational resources, and special events.

Whether you're on a desktop or mobile device, the new design offers an enhanced user experience that lets you access the information you need when you need it. Enjoy easier access to exclusive member resources, the latest industry news, ways to get involved with WHLA, and much more.

We would like to thank all the WHLA volunteer leaders who gave their time and energy to make the site what it is. Go ahead and explore, and let us know what you think!

Our Logos THEN and NOW

1970's



2000's



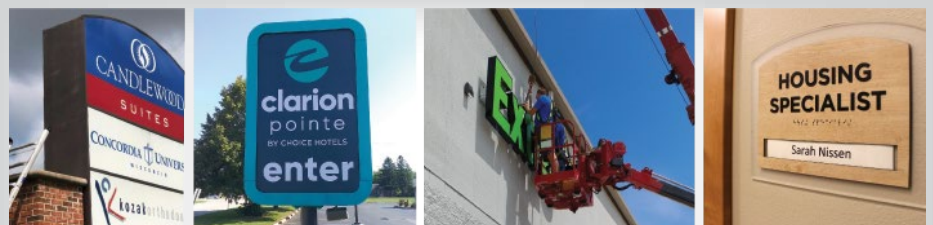
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WHLA History: Association Leadership

By Monica Goeke

As a membership-based organization, volunteer leaders were and remain the basis of the association's leadership. As the organization grew, so did the needs for dedicated staff members to assist with the operations of the growing association.

Association members began discussing hiring a paid staff member at the 27th Annual Convention in 1923, but it was not until 1926 that the first paid administrator was hired by the Wisconsin Hotel Association. Howard L. Ashworth became the first Executive Secretary of the Association in 1927. Ashworth's office was located at 125 E. Wells Street in Milwaukee. For over forty years, Ashworth faithfully maintained minutes and published the *Hotel Associations Bulletin* until retiring to Florida in 1965.

In 1966 Ralph Rank assumed the position of Executive Secretary for the Association. Renk brought his state lobbying background to the new association offices at 108 W. Wells Street. The office moved twice more, finally settling at 509 W. Wisconsin Ave. before Renk resigned to take a new role in September 1968.

Next, Harold Pearson was named Executive Vice President. During his time in the role, Pearson produced the *Wisconsin Innkeepers News*, the first issue of *InnTouch*, associate partnership programs, and the first legislative fund, now known as the WHLAPAC. Pearson served in his role until December 1982.

Robert Green became the Executive Director in January 1983, a position he held until his retirement in 1994. During his term he aided in the joint Restaurant/Innkeeper Trade Show and developed a Chapter Rebate Program. Thanks to his efforts, the association's membership numbers and advocacy efforts grew exponentially over the 11 years Green served as Executive Director.

In 1994, the association welcomed Trisha Pugal, CAE as President/CEO. Pugal led the association for 26 years before retiring in 2019. Under her leadership, WHLA became a major voice on legislative issues impacting lodging properties. The office moved to 1025 S. Moorland Drive in Brookfield where it remained until recently. After her retirement in 2019, Pugal returned in February 2020 to serve as the Interim



Want to learn more about our history and milestones? Visit WisconsinLodging.org/history.

CEO as WHLA's Search Task Force went through a successful search and selection process to retain Bill Elliott to lead the organization into the future.

Today, WHLA's staff team is led by President & CEO Bill Elliott, CAE. The new WHLA office was officially opened on August 23, 2021 at 125 N. Executive Drive Ste. 206. Elliott has been instrumental in assisting the association & its members in navigating through the pandemic, as well as streamlining and elevating the association's technology for evolving office needs.

ASSOCIATION MILESTONES



1974 – Merger

In April 1974, the Wisconsin Innkeepers Association and the Wisconsin Motel Association merged. A committee of members from both associations including Art Frydenlund, Marvin Hill, Steve Marcus, Omer Mathiason, Jack Ferrari, and Harold Pearson, reached an agreement to "effectively unify the state of the rooming industry in Wisconsin."

1946 – Golden Anniversary

The Golden Anniversary Convention began on Sunday, September 24, 1946 with a division meeting covering all phases of resort operations and tourism promotion. Monday's events include a public relations presentation by Schlitz Brewing Company and demonstrations on cooking with gas. Tuesday presentations including "Financial Problems of Hotel Business" and "Government Regulations of the Hotel Business Now and in the Future." During Tuesday's luncheon, all attendees watched new training films before hearing from Charles A. Horrworth, Executive Vice President of the American Hotel Association.



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1996 also marked WHLA's first year online with the introduction of the first official WIA Lodging Opportunities website. The site allowed users to actively search through the member database for information on lodging around the state. Our website has been refreshed numerous times since it's initial launch. Learn more about our updated website on pages 10 and 11.



1996 – Centennial

Ahead of the 100th anniversary of the association, a Centennial Celebration Task Force was formed. Task Force Members were thanked for "their interest and leadership in ensuring a successful and appropriate celebration." The Centennial Celebration was held at the Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee on November 4, 1996.

1991 – Merger

The association's membership base increased again on July 25, 1991 when the Wisconsin Innkeepers Association signed a merger agreement with Wisconsin Hospitality, Recreation and Travel (WHRT). WHRT President Gerda Safer (Cypsy Villa Resort - Eagle River) and WHRT Secretary Judy Best (Idle Hours Resort - St. Germain) were instrumental in finalizing the merger.



2021 – 125 Years

We are excited to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the association at the Wisconsin Lodging Conference & Trade Show at the Brookfield Conference Center from November 7 – 9, 2021. In honor of this historic year, the WHLA Awards Committee introduced the Wisconsin Lodging Hall of Fame to recognize industry leaders and pioneers who have contributed significantly to Wisconsin's lodging industry and WHLA.

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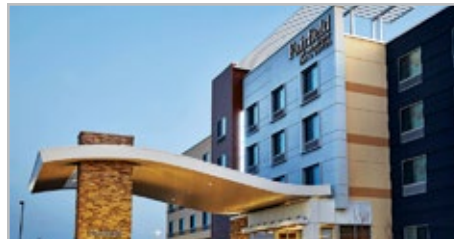
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Q&A WITH WHLA

WHLA's Lexie Mallary, Marketing & Communications Coordinator, sat down with Monica Goeke — our Director of Marketing, Services, & Events — to learn more about her role at WHLA and what she loves about Wisconsin.

Q: How long have you worked at WHLA and what are your responsibilities?

A: I just celebrated my 5 year anniversary at WHLA.

Q: What are your favorite parts of your job?

A: My favorite parts of my job are working with our volunteer leaders and planning industry events. Since I started at WHLA I've had the opportunity to work with so many thoughtful and dedicated individuals from all across the state. I especially love collaborating with our committee volunteers to plan our membership events, including our annual conference.

Q: What keeps you excited about WHLA?

A: It's easy to stay excited because of our members and the industry we are in. The perseverance that our members have shown, especially over the last two years, and the commitment that our board members have to our organization makes me want to work hard to continue to move the organization forward in a positive direction.

Q: What do you like most about Wisconsin?

A: So many things! I have a lot of favorite places to visit and love exploring new areas of our state. Of course I have favorite Wisconsin activities — cheering on the Golden Eagles at the Fiserv Forum, racing down the waterslides in the Dells, and retreating to nature at our family cabin in the Northwoods. Wisconsin really has so much to offer and we are just starting to showcase how special our destination is!

Q: What are you most excited for at WHLA in 2021?

A: I am so excited about the 125th Anniversary Wisconsin Lodging Conference! WHLA has such a rich history, and I'm looking forward to sharing that with everyone. The pandemic really reinforced the need for community and for group events, so I'm really looking forward to our members coming together in November at the Brookfield Conference Center!

Monica Goeke



Monica Goeke (right) and Trisha Pugal (left) at the 2019 Governor's Council on Tourism.

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Chapter(608) 204-9816
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**Know anyone who might be
interested in Associate Membership?
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WISCONSIN LODGING DATA

SEPTEMBER 2021						
Location	Occupancy %		Avg. Daily Rate		RevPAR	
	2021	% Chg	2021	% Chg	2021	% Chg
United States	61.6	27.6	133.11	33.9	82.04	70.9
East North Central	61.0	37.5	119.13	35.4	72.65	86.0
Wisconsin	60.5	42.6	130.84	39.2	79.14	98.4
Milwaukee	61.8	65.0	152.22	84.4	94.08	204.2
Madison	58.7	66.3	132.28	71.8	77.59	185.7
Wisconsin North Area	63.7	20.9	119.65	11.2	76.17	34.4
Wisconsin South Area	56.2	35.4	150.21	30.1	84.43	76.1
Green Bay	57.6	21.1	132.78	70.6	76.51	106.5
Appleton/Oshkosh	59.2	53.6	105.16	44.5	62.27	121.9
Wausau/Stevens Point	52.3	39.7	87.70	9.2	45.91	52.6
Eau Claire/Menomonie	60.5	41.2	96.54	16.8	58.40	65.0
Janesville/Racine	62.6	42.6	122.04	17.7	76.35	67.9
La Crosse	78.4	48.0	107.36	37.0	84.18	102.9

YTD - SEPTEMBER 2021						
Occupancy %	Avg. Daily Rate	RevPAR	2021	% Chg	2021	% Chg
57.6	28.6	121.74	14.6	70.08	47.3	
52.5	30.5	103.43	15.9	54.34	51.3	
49.9	33.7	112.63	18.4	56.15	58.2	
49.3	29.0	108.21	21.9	53.40	57.3	
45.8	31.9	100.10	14.0	45.87	50.4	
50.3	29.3	112.23	11.7	56.45	44.4	
51.2	41.9	145.80	25.0	74.62	77.4	
50.7	36.7	98.99	19.4	50.18	63.2	
49.4	39.6	94.85	20.2	46.88	67.8	
43.3	21.2	86.47	3.8	37.46	25.8	
48.1	32.9	92.17	14.7	44.32	52.4	
52.9	35.9	114.44	12.7	60.57	53.2	
55.5	39.6	94.05	17.7	52.16	64.3	

SOURCE: SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH INC. REPUBLICATIONS OR OTHER RE-USE OF THIS DATA WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF STR IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. Provided by STR. For detailed lodging performance data for your area, contact STR at (615) 824-8664 ext 3504 or info@str.com.



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The Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association has maintained an active partnership with STR for many years. As the leader in data benchmarking and analytics for the hotel industry, STR plays an integral role in our ability to track hotel performance here in Wisconsin and support our members in every way that we can.

Now, more than ever, we need our members to contribute their data. If your property does not currently participate in the STAR Program **please follow this link** or visit the following web address (surveys.str.com/s3/Hotel-Enrollment-Form) to enroll in the Hotel Survey Program. A rep from STR will reach out to you to complete the setup process and then you will start receiving complimentary monthly performance reports for your market.

We appreciate your willingness to provide data in support of WHLA and the eventual recovery of the hotel industry in our state.

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