

# Idaho Rural Health Association

Quarterly Newsletter



The Mission of the Idaho Rural Health Association is to provide leadership on issues related to rural health in Idaho through advocacy, communication, and education.

## Idaho Rural Health Association Update

### Membership Benefits:

- Quarterly newsletter focused on IRHA's interests
- Networking opportunities
- One time Introductory subscription to NRHA's magazine *Rural Roads*
- NRHA's Action Alerts
- NRHA's Media Alerts
- Discounted fees to attend IRHA conferences and other events
- Rural Health Forums

### Board of Directors:

**President:**

Linda Powell, MS, CPT  
Idaho Area Health Ed. Center, Mountain States Group, Inc.

**President-Elect:**

Mary Sheridan, RN  
Department of Health and Welfare  
State Office of Rural Health & Primary Care

**Treasurer/Secretary/Past President:**

Ryan McAllister, PT  
Gritman Medical Center

**Board Members:**

Keith Davis, MD  
Shoshone Family Medical Center  
Felice Lampert, MPH  
Benewah Community Hospital  
David Schmitz, M.D.  
Family Medicine Residency of Idaho  
Bill Woodhouse, M.D.  
Family Practice Residency Program

Over the past year, the Board of Directors of the Idaho Rural Health Association (IRHA), a 501(c)3 private non-profit corporation, has been busy revamping our mission and goals. Bylaws have been updated and our new website provides new functionality for our members.

At our July meeting, the IRHA Board voted to expand the number of board positions by 2. Nominations have been sought and elections will be held to seat 2 new members at our October meeting. Our next newsletter will highlight our two new board members.

Much effort has gone into updating our website over the past year. Members can now learn about the IRHA, who its board members are, find the dates of upcoming board meetings, look at our bylaws, and get answers to questions. We also have links to upcoming events and to proceedings from our biennial conference. Just recently we added



Rainbow and lightening storm on Camas prairie.

“Hot Topic Policy Issue” link where you can find current information on changes in rules and regulations affecting rural health providers. For instance, current links include the letter to the Health Resources and Services Administration regarding the proposed HPSA and MUA designation changes and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid's proposed changes for Rural Health Clinics and Federally Qualified Health Center. We also provide links to other rural health news and resources. To access the IRHA website, go to:

<http://www.idahorha.org/>

*Our vision is to be the recognized advocate for rural health issues in Idaho*



Idaho's pristine wilderness

## Idaho Rural Health Association Update

### Progress on Strategies

Last year we held a strategic planning session and identified several strategies to implement during the year. The following is a list of those strategies and what progress has been accomplished to date.

- 1) White Paper on Loan Repayment Programs. Several students were identified to help develop

this paper and an IRHA subcommittee formed to oversee their work. A survey was developed and distributed to all State Offices of Rural Health to study and compare states that participate in a healthcare professional loan repayment programs and if so to determine the criteria/effectiveness of each state's repayment program(s). There was a 70% response rate to the survey. A draft of the paper is in process with the plan to have a final paper by this Fall.

- 2) Rural Forums. The IRHA co-sponsored two rural forums in St. Maries and Salmon focused on methamphetamine education. A survey was designed and distributed to solicit interest in IRHA sponsoring forums in other rural communities and identifying what other topics might be of interest. If you are interested in assisting IRHA hold a forum in your community, please contact Dr. Dave Schmitz at:  
Dave.Schmitz@FMRIdaho.org.

- 3) Healthcare Workforce Summit: Exploring New Directions. Our biennial conference was held on Thursday, April 10th in Boise, Idaho. We had ten great sponsors and over 80 individuals in attendance. The proceedings and presentation summaries can be found at:

<http://www.idahorha.org/>

### *Join Us Today!*

To become a member of the Idaho Rural Health Association, simply make checks payable to Idaho Rural Health Association and mail to:

Ryan McAllister, PT (Treasurer IRHA)  
Gritman Medical Center  
810 S. Main  
Moscow, ID 83843  
208-883-1522

#### Annual Dues:

Individuals \$25  
Organizations \$100 (limited to 5 members)  
Students \$15



Thousand Springs



Wildlife abounds