

# Jean Hoagland — A Tribute to a Life Well-Lived

*By Suzanne J. Smith*

**W**hen Jean Hoagland died peacefully at her son's home on September 10, 2020, homeopathy lost a legend, because she was a vital force in so many homeopathic organizations throughout her long life. Each of these organizations will remember her warmth, patience, and dry sense of humor.

I first met Jean in 2011 when I was invited to a Homeopaths Without Borders meeting by the new executive director, Holly Manoogian. At that time, board members were Jean Hoagland (President), Joe Lillard (Treasurer) and Kim Sikorski (Secretary). After an informal but direct interview, I was asked to join the board. By the close of the meeting, I was asked to serve as Secretary of the organization... Jean could be very persuasive!

With Jean at the helm, HWB focused on, and more clearly defined, its outreach in Haiti. Her recipe for success was empowering people to take responsibility for their own health and healthcare needs. In 2012, Jean rewrote HWB's mission statement, bringing clarity and direction to the organization: "HWB exists in order to introduce or advance the understanding and use of homeopathy through teaching and example in areas where it does not yet exist or is minimally available." By 2013, HWB had expanded informal teaching into the Fundamentals of Homeopathy curriculum which was coupled with a mobile clinic program in areas of Haiti which lacked any health care infrastructure. Her gentle determination, attention to detail, and strategic thinking were instrumental in moving HWB forward and ensuring success.

Jean was introduced to homeopathy as a young mother. The family's doctor practiced homeopathy and in Jean, who saw the benefits without side effects, homeopathy found an energized new student. She once said, "With four kids, I think we only had to use penicillin just once... Other than that, homeopathy did the job." A newspaper interview tells the story of Jean going against her veterinarian's recommendation of antibiotics for the family's kitten. He stated they could help but shorten the cat's life. She chose to use homeopathy. "And



the cat lived until he was 17," Hoagland said, smiling. "He did just fine."

Upon his retirement, Jean and her husband Donald left New Jersey and moved to Mt. Dora, Florida. She immersed herself in her new hometown, serving as the executive director of the Mt. Dora Chamber of Commerce. Jean was also active in the Lake County League of Women Voters.

In 1991, she was a founding member of the Lake County Florida Affiliated Study Group which is still going strong. The Florida Homeopathic Medical Society was founded by Jean, her son Guy Hoagland, a homeopathic medical doctor, and others. In 2010, this organization transitioned to become the Florida Homeopathic Society (FHS), a non-profit organization open to all interested in homeopathy. Jean was a member of its first board. Her many contributions to homeopathy and homeopathic education resulted in the Florida Homeopathic Society creating, in 2017, the Jean Hoagland Award.

A lifetime member of the National Center for Homeopathy, Jean served for 20 years on the board of directors including 12 years as treasurer and four years as president. For her many years of volunteer service in the NCH, Jean was awarded the Julian Winston NCH Service Award at the Joint American Homeopathic Conference in 2017.

At the National Center for Homeopathy Conference in 2002, Jean put into action her concept of connecting the many diverse homeopathic groups in the United States. At that time, Jean was serving as president of the NCH. Working with Todd Rowe, a fellow NCH board member, the initial meeting of the as-yet unnamed Homeopathic Action Alliance took place over lunch at the conference. More than a few folks participated and the HAA was born. In 2004, an update on the new organization in Homeopathy Today stated, “As a group we chose the words ‘action’ and ‘alliance.’ We are much stronger when we work together. As Hemingway so aptly put it, ‘never confuse motion with action.’ And we intend to act.” In less than two years, over 10 homeopathic organizations had become part of the Homeopathic Action Alliance. Now that sounds like Jean Hoagland’s kind of organization!

Jean Hoagland was one of homeopathy’s strongest advocates. As Polly Millet, who considered Jean her mentor, told me, “I don’t think we have anyone who has done so much with so many different organizations for homeopathy—and she was not a practicing homeopath!” I agree.

She served as an active board member at Homeopaths Without Borders until mid-2016, and upon her resignation, the board honored Jean as Board Member Emerita. The board minutes of that meeting say it best. “Thank you, Jean, for your willingness to continue sharing the wisdom and insights you’ve gained from your many years of experience with HWB and the homeopathic community. We wouldn’t be where we are today without you!”

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