

Nursing

FOR HARTFORD HOSPITAL NURSES AND ALUMNAE OF THE HARTFORD HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING

SPRING 2011



*Congratulations to all of our award-winning
Hartford Hospital nurses!*

On the cover:

Sebastiano "Sebby" Golino, RN, of Bliss 10-I, the winner of Hartford Hospital's Department of Nursing Caring Award.

This page:

(l-r) Chris Waszynski, APRN, won the 2011 Nursing Spectrum Excellence Awards Mentoring award in the New England Region and is now in the running for the national Mentoring Excellence Award. Ellen Blair, APRN, was named APRN of the Year by the Connecticut Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Society. Susanne Yeakel, RN, won Hartford Hospital's Doris Armstrong Excellence in Nursing Leadership Award.

Photos by Lanny Nagler



Hartford Hospital Nursing

For Hartford Hospital Nurses and Alumnae
of the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing

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**Hartford
Hospital**

A Hartford HealthCare Partner

Nursing

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Letters

Elliot Joseph

President and Chief Executive Officer,
Hartford Hospital and Hartford HealthCare



The cover story of this issue of *Nursing Magazine* is about caring, one of our core values. Our value statement for caring is “We do the kind thing.” In the health care environment, doing the kind thing means touching the lives of patients and families with compassion, which often is as good for healing as any medicine.

Nursing is where compassion and vulnerability come together. The kindness, caring and comfort nurses bring to patients and families during the most vulnerable times in their lives are simply invaluable.

Pam Vecchiarino, a beloved nurse on our staff for 25 years who passed away in April, embodied compassion. Pam was known for her profound warmth as well as her excellent nursing skills. Her kind smile and seemingly endless energy brought comfort to hundreds of patients and families over the years. We will miss her greatly and never forget her, and I’m sure that the people she cared for always will remember her kindness.

I want to take this opportunity also to recognize Linda Berger Spivack, who left her position as vice president of Patient Care Services to pursue other interests. Linda had a major impact on the work of Team Exceed, which has done so much to make Hartford Hospital a better place to give and receive care. Linda was instrumental in implementing hourly rounding and in developing a structure to improve our HCAHPS scores. We thank Linda for her service, dedication and leadership and wish her all the best.

As you know, Cheryl Ficara has assumed the position of vice president, Patient Care Services. Cheryl has held a number of leadership positions since joining Hartford Hospital in 1990, most recently as director of Perioperative Services. Successful organizations have education, training and succession plans in place to fill leadership positions from within the organization. We’re very pleased we were able to fill the Patient Care Services leadership role through careful succession planning and with someone of Cheryl’s skills. We look forward to Cheryl’s continued leadership as we enter a new era in health care with health care reform, which will present challenges as well as opportunities.

Health care reform will have implications for the way we deliver care. We will be measured on quality and patient outcomes and will be paid according to our success in those areas. However, while we must continually work to improve quality and processes, we also know that a patient’s recovery and wellness are not only based on science. They’re also affected by being cared for as a whole person—mind, body and spirit. And so much of that is done through nursing.

Someone once said, “Nurses are angels in comfortable shoes.” I have nothing but complete confidence that the Hartford Hospital nursing team and our new nursing leadership will continue our 150-year tradition of outstanding care and caring and help us lead the way—with compassion—to the health care of the future.

Elliot Joseph

Linda Berger Spivack, RN, MSN

Vice President, Patient Care Services



Care and Compassion

As I near the end of my tenure as Hartford Hospital’s Vice President of Patient Care Services, I’m so pleased this issue of our nursing magazine is centered on a theme near and dear to my heart—caring.

I began my nursing career working with AIDS patients. While our understanding of that disease process and its mode of transmission was still in its early stages, the care and compassion for these people was yet to evolve.

Facing a bleak outcome for their future, misinformation about their disease often resulted in people diagnosed with AIDS being treated as social pariahs. At a time when patients craved care, compassion and human touch, health care workers began to fortify themselves with gowns, gloves and masks. We set up physical barriers to meeting all their needs.

Of course health care workers have to protect themselves and other patients from all forms of disease transmission, but we still need to treat the patient holistically. We need to care for their souls as well as their immediate physical needs.

I learned so much from working with those AIDS patients. A letter written for them, a book borrowed from the library or a conversation that lingered on beyond one’s shift was so appreciated. This experience imprinted upon me the need to keep the “care” in nursing as our profession’s main focus.

Since then, increased patient acuity, the technology explosion and so many other factors seem to compete for the attention of today’s nurse. But caring has always been the core of nursing and should always remain so. It’s the foundation upon which all nursing skills are built. Sometimes a gentle reminder to center our priorities on “caring” is just what the nursing profession ordered. A simple touch and a kind word are powerful healing tools.

I’ve been so impressed with the nurses at Hartford Hospital since the day I arrived. I’ve seen such great examples of caring and compassion here. Working alongside truly amazing nurses has been a source of inspiration for me. As I complete my service here, I leave confident that patient care will continue to exceed expectations because our nurses do care.

I’m thrilled Cheryl Ficara has accepted the position of our next vice president of Patient Care Services. She’s been an outstanding leader as director of Perioperative Services, and I know the transition will be seamless.

I’ll genuinely miss seeing all of you every day. It’s been my privilege to work with so many talented people, and I wish everyone the best.

I’m proud of all Hartford Hospital’s nurses, past and present. You’ve come so far. I can only imagine the great things you’ll accomplish in our next 150 years.

Linda Berger Spivack



Hartford Hospital Nurses Named Nightingale Winners

Fifteen exceptional registered nurses from Hartford Hospital have been named winners of prestigious Nightingale Awards for Excellence in Nursing. The Nightingale Awards, Connecticut's largest statewide nursing recognition program, celebrates the many contributions nurses make on a daily basis.

Winners were honored at the annual gala on May 5 at the Hartford Marriott Downtown in conjunction with National Nurses Week. Hosted by VNA HealthCare, the Hartford event honored 102 nurses this year, representing 30 different institutions.

The program's goals are to encourage retention, inspire future nurses, focus public attention and recognize the breadth and scope of nursing practice at the local level. There are now four Nightingale Awards programs held simultaneously throughout the state, in Hartford, Fairfield, New Haven and New London.

Registered nurses, LPNs, APRNs and nurse practitioners may be nominated for recognition by their employers if they have made a significant impact on patient care and/or the nursing profession; gone "beyond the call" in a clearly illustrated scenario;

demonstrated excellence above what is normally expected; shown commitment to the community served in a way that is significantly above the norm; or achieved a lifelong legacy in a particular arena.

As part of its focus on the future of the nursing profession, the event raises funds for scholarships for local nursing students. More than \$48,500 in scholarships has been awarded since the Nightingale program began in 2003. Ten students received scholarships this year.



Stephanie Badalucco, RN, BSN
Oncology



Nancy Barrow, RNC, BSN, MS
Women's Health



Sharon Clark, RN
The Institute of Living



Dan DiTomaso, RNC, BSN, MS
Case Coordination



Shelley Dube, RN, BSN
Operating Room



Ginger Goddu, RN, MSN
Medicine



Pamela Gregg, RN
Women's Health



Pamela Hannon, RNC, BSN
Neuro Intensive Care



Rebecca Joiner, RN, BSN
Transplant



Ramona Kondracki, RN, BSN
Cardiology



Helen Perez, RNC, BSN
Cardiovascular Surgery



Claire Quaggin, RN
Surgery



Janet Rigor, RN
Jefferson House



Samantha VanVoorhis, RNC, BSN
LIFE STAR



Donna White, RN
Operating Room



Susanne Yeakel, RN, MSN, (center) nurse manager of Bliss 8, was the recipient of this year's Doris Armstrong Excellence in Nursing Leadership Award. With Yeakel at the awards ceremony are (left) Linda Spivack, RN, MSN, then vice president of Patient Care Services, and Cathy Yavinsky, RN, MS, nurse director, Department of Surgery and Dialysis.

Putting the Care

Certified Nurse Anesthetist Jean Coombes, CRNA, provides her patient with the comfort of a warm, human touch during eye surgery.



Back in Nursing Care

When her cataract surgery was finished, the patient first thanked her surgeon and then thanked her nurse anesthetist for holding her hand throughout the procedure. Mild sedation helped calm the patient during eye surgery, but the reassuring touch of the nurse's hand was really the best medicine.

Hartford Hospital Eye Center Certified Nurse Anesthetist Jean Coombes, CRNA, purposefully distracted her patient and decreased her anxiety intraoperatively with the comfort derived from human touch.

"We hold their hand because it helps keep their blood pressure and pulse low. I can see it; I can demonstrate it. That's better for them not to be so hypertensive," Coombes says. "I think some people find it scary lying there under the surgical drape. They're listening to what's going on. Holding their hand keeps them grounded."

It's no surprise to nurses that kind words and a caring touch mean so much to their patients. After all, that's why most nurses chose this field. It's the caring profession. What might be surprising is the fact that research has verified just how important it is for nurses to care for their patient's mind, body and soul, holistically. Reconnecting with the "care" in nursing is becoming a national trend.

A Leader in Caring Research

Jean Watson RN, PhD, developed Caring Science and her Caring Theory as a means of preserving the caring aspects of nursing practice. She recognized that advanced technology, increased patient acuity and shortened hospital stays compete for a nurse's time and attention. The tender, loving, caring portion of nursing is at risk of becoming an endangered species in the task-driven world of today's health care. Watson has been on a mission to see that doesn't happen.

Watson earned her graduate degree in psychiatric-mental health nursing and her doctorate in educational psychology and counseling. The founder of the original Center for Human Caring in Colorado, she is now the founder and director of the nonprofit foundation, The Watson Caring Institute.

Watson's curriculum vitae is extensive. She taught nursing at the University of Colorado. A fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and a past president of the National League of Nursing, Watson's many honors include an International Kellogg Fellowship and a Fulbright Research award. She's been awarded eight honorary doctoral degrees from institutions in six different countries. A frequent guest lecturer, she also works as a consultant and is the author of many books on caring. When Watson addresses the issue of caring in nursing, people listen.

Caring Cognizance

"You have to have the balance of caring and curing. People can't be healed from curing alone," Watson says. "You have to have caring, and the healing comes from that inner human process that caring offers. You can treat someone and cure them, but they may not be healed. Likewise, someone may not be cured, but may be healed."

continued



Jean Watson, PhD, RN, is a well-known nurse, author and educator who stresses the importance of caring in the healing process.

“Caritas” is a Latin word used to describe altruistic love and a deeper level of caring. Watson’s concept of clinical caritas processes includes the practice of loving-kindness, being authentically present, developing a trusting relationship, creating a healing environment and administering care with attention to the alignment of mind, body and spirit.

Watson suggests the caritas processes can and should apply to the caregiver, as well. In order to support the one being cared for, the caregiver needs to connect with his or her inner spirit and sense of self.

“A nurse can be technically accurate in what they’re doing, but the way in which they’re doing it can actually be harmful,” Watson says. “There is research showing your human presence and how you relate to that person can actually be for better or worse.”

From a patient point of view, in Watson’s model, nurses are described as biogenic (caring and giving), bioactive (concerned and responsive), biopassive (robotic), biostatic (cold and aloof), or biocytic (toxic). Patients expect nurses to be caring and comforting while meeting their needs.

It seems most nurses do meet patient expectations. The annual Gallup poll surveyed Americans to rate professions on their honesty and ethical standards. Since 1991 nurses have consistently topped the list, except for 2001 when firefighters took the top spot.

“The public is so trusting of nurses because historically, if not currently, nurses are drawn to nursing. It’s a calling,” Watson says. “People are called to it with a desire to offer compassionate service to humanity.”

Partnering in Care

Reiki Master Barbara Myjak, RN, BSN, MBA, has volunteered her services to the Integrative Medicine department for close to a decade. Retired from nursing, she’s embraced an alternative method of delivering care through Reiki.

“It’s amazing. I’ve gotten great feedback from patients,” Myjak says. “They say they feel relaxed and really appreciate it. They want to know, ‘Can you come back tomorrow?’”

Myjak recalls giving backrubs to her patients as a pleasant part of their care. She says nurses used to have more time for things like that. Performing Reiki treatments throughout the hospital, she’s noticed how busy nurses are today. Still, the human contact aspect of nursing is important to her, and she’d like to see all nurses get the chance to reconnect with it.

“I’ve had people cry because they’ve had so much anxiety and tension in their body,” she says. “The release that

Reiki brings just brings on the tears. That’s so much better for their healing.”

It’s clear to her that Hartford Hospital is committed to the “care” in health care by their continued support for what she does.

“Support from the medical staff at Hartford Hospital has been wonderful,” Myjak says. “I’ve knocked on patients’ doors and have had doctors say, ‘Wait. I’m almost done. He needs you more than me.’”

Still, the demands placed on today’s nursing practitioner tend to edge out the moments that could be reserved for a kind word or a caring gesture. That’s why Watson states the importance of giving language to the phenomenon of the art and science of nursing.

“Without language, you don’t exist. You need to give it language—a voice—and articulate the phenomenon,” Watson said. “Nursing has largely been invisible because we haven’t had the language to define the beautiful dimensions of the covenant we have with humanity of sustaining and caring and wholeness, integrity and helping to eliminate vulnerability when someone is most wounded and vulnerable.”

Watson’s model of nursing is finding its way into nursing education in nursing schools and into clinical areas. The language of caring is being restored to professional practice. Hartford Hospital is also embracing this language. H3W workgroups are meeting to re-establish the organization’s value system of: Integrity, Safety, Excellence and Caring. This gentle reminder of the values connected to health care are what Watson would call the repatterning of the delivery-of-care model.

“They are actually going back to the authentic changes coming from the practitioners themselves,” she says. “They become more conscious and intentional about the way in which they are present with another person, in a given moment, in the midst of doing the usual tasks. They are reframing their understanding of the tasks and skills. They’re not just doing a task; they’re offering a caring and healing modality.”

According to Watson, practicing this caring model of nursing allows nurses to be more fulfilled and to find meaning and distinction in their own discipline, their own profession.

More information on Jean Watson’s Theory of Caring is available on her website, <http://www.watsoncaringscience.org>. Watson’s books: *Human Caring Science: A Theory of Nursing*, *Second Edition* and *Assessing and Measuring Caring in Nursing and Health Science: Second Edition* are great additions to the caring nurse’s library.

A Culture of Healing

In keeping with Hartford Hospital's commitment to excellence, clinicians at the Institute of Living are implementing a best practices model of inpatient care that enhances comfort, safety and recovery.

Innovation in psychiatric care is part of the DNA of Hartford Hospital's Institute of Living. The IOL was founded in 1822 specifically to offer an approach to care that was revolutionary at the time. Known as "moral treatment," this innovative approach replaced the shackles, squalor and abandonment of previous centuries with comfortable surroundings, constructive activities and, most importantly, an emphasis on respect for the dignity and individuality of each patient. This tradition of innovation continues today, most recently with the implementation of a multifaceted initiative called "The Institute of Living's Best Practices Model of Care," which is already having a positive impact on both patients and staff.

When veteran IOL psychiatric nurse Ellen Blair, APRN, became director of nursing at the IOL in late 2009, she and her colleagues on the collaborative management team—Psychiatrist-in-Chief Harold Schwartz, MD; Medical Director Theodore Mucha, MD; and Director of Clinical Operations Annetta Caplinger—undertook to create a model of care that ensured the use of evidence-based best practices in the Institute's inpatient care setting.

"Our goals included reducing the need for seclusion or restraint, calming agitation and preventing violence and suicide," says Ms. Blair. "We wanted to build on our existing strengths and incorporate the best new ideas so as to create a therapeutic setting where patients and staff could all feel safe and comfortable and

that would help patients get well."

Part of the challenge was to ensure that care continued to embody the fundamental principles of moral treatment on which the Institute was founded, while dealing with the realities of today's health care environment, with its emphasis on short-term hospital stays.

The team structured their efforts on the How Hartford Hospital Works (H3W) continuous quality improvement process, involving staff at every level and organizing workgroups to focus on key areas.

Identifying Best Practices

Ellen Blair loves a challenge as much as she loves psychiatric nursing. Recently named by the Connecticut Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Society as APRN of the Year, Ms. Blair regularly conducts research to enhance clinical practice. So her first step was to delve into the literature to learn what the evidence shows are best practices in psychiatric inpatient care. She and her H3W teams also visited several other psychiatric hospitals and reached out to colleagues near and far to gain their perspectives. All the participants then gathered at a retreat to share information and define the components that would constitute the Institute of Living's Best Practices Model of Care. Ms. Blair then conducted a variety of sessions to educate staff about the model and how to put it into practice on a daily basis.

Sharon Clark, RN, a nurse on Donnelly 2 South, and Edward Clukey II, nurse manager on Donnelly 3 North, talk with a new patient. Communication is key to building therapeutic relationships with patients right from the start.



Kathleen Rich, RN, at left, a nurse on Donnelly 1 North, and IOL Director of Nursing Ellen Blair, APRN, care for a patient in one of the Institute's "comfort rooms."

Center:
Sensory modulation in action. Chris Goodman, RN, a nurse on Donnelly 1 South, uses soft, stuffed animals to help a patient feel calm.



Elements of the Institute's Model of Care

The end result of the teams' work is a model that employs a number of concepts that work together to enhance patient care, promote safety and foster healing, both during the patient's stay and after discharge. These elements include:

Milieu Therapy

Staff work to ensure that the milieu—or environment—is itself conducive to healing. Maintaining a positive atmosphere and building good relationships between patients and staff members are priorities. The environment is also structured, with patients participating in various groups on a regular basis.

"It used to be thought that very challenged patients couldn't take part in groups," says Sharon Clark, RN, a nurse on the Donnelly 2 South unit, where many patients have chronic schizophrenia. "But we've found that when patients are in groups they tend to feel less agitated. They love the structure. We give them the structure they have trouble giving themselves."

Nurses and other staff members also spend most of their time out on the unit, among the patients, rather than behind a desk.

"One of the beautiful things about psychiatric nursing is that nurses use themselves as therapy in daily practice," says Ms. Blair. "The nurse's presence in the milieu is very powerful, even if you're just sitting down among patients in the day room."

"Modern" Moral Treatment

The H3W team chose the term "Modern" Moral Treatment to describe the way the tenets of moral treatment are manifested in today's health care environment. It emphasizes treating—and describing—patients as individual human beings, not as embodiments

of a particular disorder. Staff, for example, avoid referring to a patient by his or her disease, for example, "a schizophrenic," and instead refer to the patient by name or as "a person with schizophrenia."

Patients are also offered choices to encourage them to be involved in their own recovery.

"Often, patients feel helpless and hopeless, but if you give them some choices, they feel as if they are participating in treatment," says Ms. Clark.

Risking Connections

Staff members help patients recover from traumatic experiences by building "RICH" relationships with them, that is, relationships characterized by respect, information sharing, connections and hope. The focus is on relationships as healing.

Recovery Model

This approach is based on the understanding that the goal of psychiatric care is for individuals to recover and go on to lead meaningful lives. Staff offer hope to patients and take a holistic approach to care, focusing on the person, rather than the symptoms. Care aims to prepare patients for life outside the hospital. With sensory modulation (below), for example, "We try to identify individual coping skills that people can learn and practice in the hospital and then carry into their everyday lives," says Donnelly 3 South Nurse Manager Barbara Emery, RN, MS, APRN.

Sensory Modulation

Staff members work with patients to help them gain self-awareness and develop personalized techniques for coping with stress, anxiety, anger or other powerful emotions. Staff and patients, together, complete a sensory modulation tool that results in a list of things the patient finds calming, so both can draw on



Under the IOL Best Practices Model of Care, nurses spend as much time as possible in the milieu with patients. Here, (l-r) Laurie Lombardo, RN, of Donnelly 3 South and Jamie Santaniello, RN, of Donnelly 3 North, look over notes in a common area.

PHOTOS BY LANNY NAGLER

it when needed. “Comfort rooms” featuring soft objects; cozy, weighted blankets; soft colors and lighting; gentle music and more are available to patients who need this sort of experience to calm themselves when they’re having trouble coping.

Broset Violence Checklist

This tool helps staff members determine whether a patient is experiencing feelings that may progress to violent behavior. Clinicians score every patient on every shift every day. If a patient’s score is high, staff members check on that patient every five to 15 minutes or, if necessary, remain with the patient at all times.

“It’s easier to deal with somebody who’s irritated early, rather than wait until they’re extremely agitated to do an intervention,” says Ms. Clark.

Ellen Blair has received a grant from Hartford Hospital for a research project aimed at measuring the effectiveness of the Broset tool. “We are studying violence intensively and analyzing every incident,” Ms. Blair says.

Psychopharmacologic Model

Developed by Drs. Evan Fox, John Goethe, Raveen Mehendru, Theodore Mucha and David Pepper, this protocol provides for rapid medication response to deal with extremely agitated patients who represent an imminent threat to themselves or others. It is part of a highly individualized treatment plan. If rapid tranquilization is used, staff review the situation afterward to see whether they may have missed early signals that an alternative intervention was needed.

Suicide Prevention

The Institute has developed age-appropriate suicide assessment forms based on the well-known SAFE-T model of suicide prevention. Clinicians assess a patient’s level of suicide risk at admission, during multidisciplinary team

meetings, at critical points in treatment, when the level of care changes and at discharge and take appropriate precautions.

Debriefing of Seclusion and Restraint Events

When a patient must be restrained or secluded, the care team and administrators immediately come together to determine how to quickly end the restraint or seclusion. They also discuss what could be done to avoid having to resort to these methods with that particular patient in the future.

Promising Results

The model appears to be achieving its goals.

“I feel there has been a significant change on the units,” says Barbara Emery. “The emphasis is on connecting more with patients, helping them help themselves and reducing the number of times we need to use restraint or seclusion—our last steps for helping someone stay in control. The staff have really embraced this as part of everyday practice.”

Sharon Clark says, “By implementing the daily schedule, groups, more contact with patients and the Broset scores, we have been able to reduce restraint and seclusion immensely.”

Despite the successes, the work of ensuring best practices will never be finished, says Ellen Blair.

“The model will continue to evolve,” Ms. Blair says. “We will keep teaching it and talking about it and getting feedback from staff on how it’s going. We’ll research and monitor it so we’ll keep getting better and better.”



A T R I B U T E

Pamela Leigh Vecchiarino RN, MSN

When the news of Pamela Vecchiarino's passing on April 16, 2011, reached the Hartford Hospital community, everyone was saddened and genuinely affected by her loss.

Michael Davis, RN, MBA, and Chris Rooney, RN, MSN, channeled their grief into a visual tribute to Vecchiarino. With the approval of Linda Berger Spivack, vice president of Patient Care Services, and Jeffrey Flaks, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Hartford Hospital, Davis and Rooney gathered supplies and the assistance of many nurse educators, their own B11E nurses and other staff throughout the hospital. Together they created and distributed 1,200 purple ribbons, which were worn as a testimonial to the fine nurse Vecchiarino was and to the friendship and caring she shared with everyone.

"She was one of a kind. Everyone loved Pam," Davis says. "She touched far more than just nursing. She reached out to the entire organization."

Davis and Rooney's idea was well-received throughout the hospital. From administrators to staff members, many sought out the ribbons to wear in support of the Hartford Hospital family and also to support Vecchiarino's husband, Joseph, and her beloved daughter, Gemma Leigh.

In 1986, Vecchiarino began her career at Hartford Hospital as a nursing intern. Upon receiving her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree in 1987, she became a staff nurse on the medical oncology unit.

In 1990, Vecchiarino was promoted to assistant manager of the pulmonary step-down unit, and one year later was promoted to the manager position. She went on to earn her Master of Science in Nursing degree from the University of Hartford in 1999. Since 2002, she has served the hospital as nurse director of Medicine, Oncology and IV Therapy.

During those years, Vecchiarino served on many and varied committees. She received the Linda Richards Nursing Award for excellence in nursing practice, not just once, but twice.

The Connecticut Nurses Association awarded the Doris M. Armstrong Nursing Leadership Award to Vecchiarino in 2009 for outstanding nurse leadership, expertise in nursing, ability to collaborate with others and advancing the nursing profession. The CNA likened the award to a Pulitzer for nurses.

"She was a great person—inside and out," Eileen Hermann, RN, MSN, says. "She was one of the best nurses and nurse leaders Hartford Hospital has ever seen. She was the proverbial glass half full. She never said no and she always found a way to make things happen."

Similar sentiments were echoed from everyone who knew Vecchiarino or knew of her. Her legacy is that of a warm, caring, committed nurse and fellow human being. Cheryl Ficara, RN, MS, shared experiences with Vecchiarino from a leadership position and credited her with an immense vivaciousness and ability to work through situations with humor.

"She was so much fun. She just put a smile on your face. One thing she did as a leader," Ficara says, "was to spend the time and energy to celebrate her team and reward their successes. She was immensely dedicated to the profession of nursing in a way that few can match. She was amazing."

A scholarship fund for Vecchiarino's daughter, Gemma Leigh Vecchiarino, is available for anyone wishing to contribute in her memory. Donations may be sent to Jacqueline McQuay, 53 Minnechaug Drive, Glastonbury, CT, 06033.



From the Alumnae Association President



It is hard to believe 2011 is half over! There have been so many national and international disasters in the headlines over the past six months that it sometimes feels as if very little is going right! The rebound in the economy has been slower than expected, and many people are still struggling.

On a more positive note, there have been some very good things happening at Hartford Hospital, including the beautiful renovation of the main hospital lobby. For those who have not seen it, the transformation is amazing. Thanks to Archivist Steve Lytle's assistance, the lobby is filled with historical photographs of Hartford Hospital, the medical staff and the nurses. Viewing these photographs reminds us of how far Hartford Hospital and medicine have come over the years. As I wrote about in the past, one of the benefits of the renovation was that our nursing statue, "The Caregiver," was moved from the Meditation Garden into the Hartford Hospital lobby, where it will be better protected.

On Saturday, June 4, following the luncheon for special classes of HHSN, a simple re-dedication ceremony for the statue was held. Our traditional "tea" was served with punch and dessert. We are pleased that Lloyd and Cathy Glasson (the artist and his wife) could be present for the ceremony. It is a proud moment for our Alumnae Association. We have Linda Spivack, former vice president of patient care services at Hartford Hospital, to thank for her assistance in making the relocation happen. Linda played a pivotal role in the relocation plan for the statue, for which we are extremely grateful.

On Sunday, June 5, the annual Alumnae Banquet was held at the Cromwell Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center. We had another great turnout for this festive affair!

The Alumnae Association of the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing has chosen several charities to support this year. Included were donations to the American Red Cross to aid Japan in recovering from the devastating earthquake and tsunami that occurred in March of this year, the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Interval House (women's shelter) and Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

In addition to the charitable contributions, the board of the Alumnae Association has made several changes to membership. The membership fee will be reduced to \$10.00 annually starting in 2012 and will include membership in the Bed Fund. With these changes, we hope to attract new members and make better use of our Bed Fund. I would like to encourage any members to be in touch with Pat Ciarcia by e-mail or visit the website at www.HHSNalumnae.org if they have any questions about what is covered under the Bed Fund.

Karen Stinson Mazzarella, RN, BA (HHSN 1969)
President
Alumnae Association of the
Hartford Hospital School of Nursing

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Join Your Alumnae Association

Become one of the more than 600 HHSN graduates who belong to the Alumnae Association of the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing. Membership dues are only \$30 per year.* Members are eligible to apply for the Alumnae Bed Fund and scholarships.

To join, simply mail your \$10 non-tax-deductible check (payable to the Alumnae Association of HHSN Inc.) to the address below, along with your full name, class year, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address.

For more information, please contact Karen Stinson Mazzarella, president, at kmazzar@ccmckids.org; Pat Ciarcia, executive secretary, at patciarcia@snet.net; or visit our website at www.HHSNalumnae.org. You can also write to the Alumnae Association of the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing, 560 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106.

*\$10 per year effective January 1, 2012



Alumnae Spotlight

Faithful Alumnae Nurses

Hartford Hospital School of Nursing has a rich history dating from 1877 to 1976. Over nearly a century, more than 4,500 nurses received their nursing diplomas from the school. There were five nurses in the first graduating class in 1879 and 124 graduate nurses in the last class in 1976. Most of the nurses chose to work at Hartford Hospital after graduating, while others used their three-year nursing diplomas as a stepping stone to higher nursing education, obtaining BSN or MSN degrees. Most started on the various nursing units, and some climbed the ladder into nursing management, leadership and administrative positions. Today, nurses at Hartford Hospital work in many different areas, including clinical nursing units, ICUs, Case Management, Assessment Center, Bed Management, Ambulatory Health, Clinics, Occupational Health and Radiology. Although the School of Nursing closed 35 years ago, more than 50 Hartford Hospital School of Nursing graduates currently work or volunteer at Hartford Hospital. Any of these nurses would tell you that the education and training that the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing provided was a foundation for nursing excellence with the patient as the central focus. The Alumnae Spotlight highlights these Hartford Hospital School of Nursing graduates who today work or volunteer at Hartford Hospital.

Karen Buscarello Bement '76 RN, IV Therapy
Theresa Gwozdz '76, RN MS APRN CRNA,
Nurse Anesthetist, OR
Mary Jaworski Sharp '76, RN, Institute of Living
Ann M. Sullivan '76, RN, MS, Finance, Decision Support
Kathleen Shea Villano '76, RN, OR/Ambulatory
Annette Colagiovanni Benker, '75, RN, BSN,
Occupational Health
Elizabeth McCarthy Lawler '75, RN, Case Management
Diane Leggio Lebedzki '75, RN, PACU
Ann Zawislinski Pistrutto, '75, RN, Surgical
Lucy Halligan Tremblay '75, RN, Case Management
Diane Zoppa Bonin '74, RN, Case Coordinator
Bernadette Adamik Grillo '74, RN, OR/Ambulatory Care
Kathleen Cooper Iacoboni '74, RN, IV Therapy
Mary Beatson Johnson '74, RN, Assessment Center
Katherine Reut Korfel '74, RN, Neuro
Jane Wallace Lasher '74, RN, BSN, Radiology/Short Stay
Susan Richardson Lynch '74, RN, Labor and Delivery
Ann Dubiel Bonin '73, RN, Cardiology
Joan McKinney Carlson '73, RN, Dialysis Unit
Kathy Drexler Chance '73, RN, Institute of Living
Deborah Fortin '73, RN, Cardiac Lab
Anne Kennedy Hart '73, RN, Radiology Oncology
Paula Janik Holmes '73, APRN, Institute of Living
Cathy Matuszak Jeffery '73, RN, OR
Patricia Benevento Mead '73, RN, GI Clinic
Barbara Biel Nowak '73, RN, Cardiovascular Surgical ICU
Nancy Kusiak Reklaitis '73, RN, PACU
Sharon Kingston Scrivano, '73, APRN,
Emergency Department

Janis Wayne '73, RN, Case Management
Karen Beattie White '73, RN, Bed Management
Justine Poltorak Bedlack '72, RN, Jefferson House
Dianne Woods Bronkie '72, RN, CCRN, CNRN,
Neuro Surgical ICU
Alane Silver Strong '72, RN, BSN, Occupational Health
Janet Gore Bernacki '71, RN, Bed Management
Donna Schlosser Cavalleri '71, RN, Medical ICU
Bonnie Bissell Hill '71, RN, Jefferson House
Louise Wasilewski Honiss '71, RN, PACU
Nancy Golas Kelly '71, RN, Assessment Center
Karen McHugh '71, RN, Transplant
Sharon Sideranko '71, RN, Case Management
Joan Carpenter '70, MSN, RNC, OB/GYN;
Adjunct Clinical Faculty at UConn
Marcia Minick Friedlander '70, RN, OB
Nancy Kania Kowalchik '70, RN, OR/Ambulatory Care
Suzanne Russell Russell '70, RN,
Center for Bloodless Med/Surg
Maura Mintel Pauli '69, BS, MSN, APRN, CS,
Adult Primary Care
Phyllis Weiner DeMaine '67, RN, Case Management
Betty Ann Vose Fusco '66, RN, Assessment Center
Karen Lockert '66 RN, Case Coordinator
Gail Pendleton Rapoza '66, RN, BA, Orthopedic Clinic
Martha Bruggestrat Richmond '65, RN, Neuro
Frances Bazzano Lund '64, RN, Jefferson House
Sandra Agud Trifiro '62, RN, Clinical Research
Patricia Rinaldi '58, RN, Volunteer
June Perret Noble '54, RN, Volunteer—Pet Therapy
Ruth Ruff Griswold '46, Volunteer



PHOTO: LANNY NAGLER

Left of statue, left to right:
Mary Sharp, RN, Sharon Scrivano,
RN, Suzanne Russell RN,
Beth Lawler, RN, Nancy Kelly, RN,
Lucy Tremblay, RN, Sandy Agud, RN;
Right of statue, front row, left to right:
Annette Benker, RN, Pattie Rinaldi,
RN, Maura Pauli, RN, Pat Meade, RN.
Back row: Betty Ann Fusco, RN,
Terry Gwozdz, RN, Alane Strong, RN,
Jane Lasher, RN, Barbara Nowack,
RN, Karen White, RN.

A Look Back

A Nurse's Cape – Symbol of Tender, Loving Care

A beautiful nurse's cape from the class of 1927 of the Hartford Hospital Training School for Nurses used to hang on the wall of Beth Cheney's office. The long, blue, woolen cape with a gold lining and Hartford Hospital initials embroidered on its stand-up collar served a dual purpose as a work of art and as a source of inspiration for Cheney.

The cape belonged to Cheney's grandmother, Arleen Whitham Cheney. The elder Cheney had given the cape to her granddaughter along with some nursing wisdom.

"I grew up listening to her stories about what it was really like to be a nurse," Cheney says. "What she imparted to me was the gift of what nursing was, which was tender, loving care."

That gift serves Cheney well today as an APRN and director, Prenatal Clinic and Oncology Services, at Windham Community Memorial Hospital. She embraces the new technologies of health care, but relies on what she refers to as the art and science of tender, loving care in order to deliver the best care to her patients.

Cheney's mother, Verna Cheney, was also a nurse. She worked as a visiting nurse and then retired after 35 years in the Emergency Department in Windham.

"I've been very fortunate," Cheney said. "From the time I was a young girl I've had very strong role models in my life to help shape me and guide me through my career. I hear my grandmother's and my mother's voices in my head a lot. They were both very giving and nurses I would fashion my practice after."

Whitham Cheney was a nursing student during Colonel Louis Richmond Cheney's tenure as the president of Hartford Hospital. His administration began in 1918 and continued for 26 years. President Cheney's



Arleen Whitham Cheney

wife, Mary, worked tirelessly for the institution. She gave the Eliza Trumbull Robinson Memorial Children's Ward to the hospital in 1901, and she was an organizer and first president of the Women's Auxiliary. Built in 1928, the Cheney library remains a memorial to Mary Cheney. The library was a gift to the hospital from her husband.

It's likely that Whitham Cheney was unaware, at that time, she would marry into the family of a distant relative of the hospital's administrator and chief benefactor. She worked briefly at Hartford Hospital as a head nurse after graduating from the training school. In 1929, she married Jack D. Cheney and continued as a home-care nurse. Always the caregiver, she cared for just about all of her family members, neighbors and members of her church. Visiting the sick was an extension of her nursing persona.

At 92 years old, Whitham Cheney underwent bilateral knee replacement surgery. She told family members her painful knees slowed her down. She was still busy visiting shut-ins on a regular basis.

Proud to be a nurse educated at Hartford Hospital, Whitham Cheney never forgot her roots. She frequently hosted get-togethers with her classmates at her home in West Hartford. She was the oldest living graduate of Hartford Hospital in 2002. She was 97 years old when she died.

The cape, along with other artifacts from the Hartford Hospital Training School for Nurses, is on display in the High Building lobby, next to the caregiver statue.

"I think my grandmother would be honored," Cheney says about her grandmother's cape being included in this display. "She was a modest woman, but I think she would be thrilled and touched to know she was remembered."

As a member of the extended Hartford Hospital family, Cheney views her employment as her family coming full circle from where they began 84 years ago. She's honored to continue her family's nursing legacy.



Beth Cheney, in the High Building lobby

Alumnae The Pillbox

CLASS OF 1933



Mabel Alyce Cote Donald '37 recently passed away just nine days before her 102nd birthday. In a letter to the Alumnae Association her son describes his mother as "a pistol and totally on top of her game," prior to her death. She also gave great tribute to her alma mater, Hartford Hospital School of Nursing. Mabel's nursing career began as a private duty nurse and then as a Navy nurse during World War II.

CLASSES OF 1935 and 1960



Carolyn Bickford Calhoun '60 and **Lucille More Hardman '35** pose during an HHSN celebration of Carolyn's 50th reunion and Lucille's 75th reunion.

CLASS OF 1937

Miriam "Mim" Hausman Nichols '37 recently celebrated her 97th birthday and still volunteers at McLean Rehabilitation Center. Mim's class of 1937 was the first class that started the "golden bedpan" tradition that is carried on annually at the June Alumnae Banquet.



Barbara Thurston Stevens '67 is a genealogist as well as a nurse and has become the repository of all family photos, letters and family memorabilia. She recently was going through a box of family photos and found this HHSN student photo (at left) of **Dorothy Reed Peasco '37**.

CLASS OF 1939

Sylvia Rubin Frank '39 passed away in March 2011. She lived 94 productive years and was swimming twice a week and driving her own car right up to the time of her death. She was a member of the Alumnae Association.

CLASS OF 1942

Josephine Orlando Bombaci '42 was featured posthumously in the Annual Report for the Town of Essex. After graduating from HHSN, Jo worked as a private duty nurse prior to raising her family. She volunteered for many years for the American Red Cross Blood Drives in Essex. She was a strong advocate for the town of Essex as was evident by her involvement in her community, church, and local politics. In the dedication, it was written that Jo's "goal was to help Essex retain the charm, beauty and small town atmosphere she loved so much."



"Jo"
JOSEPHINE ANN ORLANDO
Danbury, Conn.
"She walks in beauty like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry
skies;
And all that's best of dark and
bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes."

CLASS OF 1956



HHSN Alums celebrate the birthday of **Pat Audet '56**. (Pat is sitting). Back row: **Marion Kohler Miller '56**, **Elizabeth Wallace Knight '56** and **Carolyn Bickford Calhoun '60**.

CLASS OF 1959



Ardell Schmidt Patterson '59 and 11 of her classmates convene each year to share old times and experience their "retired freedom." For the past nine years they have visited each other's home territory and have traveled to Vermont, Jamaica, Maine, New Hampshire, Cape Cod and the New Jersey Shore. This year they will meet in Conway, New Hampshire. Ardell requests that classmates keep in touch, stay well, and look forward to their 55th reunion. Note Ardell's new email address: arpat222@yahoo.com.

CLASS OF 1960



Cissy Palau Jacobs '60, Dottie Punch McDermott '60, and Carolyn Calhoun '60 pictured at the Yacht Club in St Petersburg, FL.

Carolyn Bickford Calhoun '60 is enjoying retirement and says she doesn't miss work, only the people.
Peg Garrison '60 is celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Hartford Hospital Prostate Cancer Support Group which she has been the coordinator for since its inception.
Joan Aggard Newth '60 is very proud of her granddaughter who is in NYC trying out the modeling business.

CLASS OF 1961

Nancy Miller Bailey '61 RN, BSN, owns a townhouse in a retirement community in Texas. The amenities are plentiful and she could be out playing bridge, quilting, singing, etc., each day but tries to use discretion in her extracurricular activities. She still works one day each week in Personal Care Group Homes, taking care of the elderly who are unable to care for themselves. She loves it and is not willing to give it up quite yet. She is enjoying her retirement and is blessed to be in good health. She is looking forward to seeing all of her classmates as they celebrate their HHSN 50th class reunion in June.

Barbara Hickey Wilcox '61 works two days per week as a homecare hospice nurse in the Western Carolina Mountains. She and her husband Chuck celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in December.



Jean Wells Reynolds '61, June Werdelin Roncarti '61, Lois Sharp Pabst '61, and Barbara Hickey Wilcox '61 pictured at Jean's family's summer cottage at Twin Lakes.



1961 Class roommates: **June Werdelin Roncarti '61 and Barbara Hickey Wilcox '61** pictured at Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme, CT

CLASS OF 1962

In 2012 the Class of 1962 will celebrate their 50th class reunion from HHSN. Please save the weekend of June 2 and June 3, 2012. The Alumnae Banquet will be held on Sunday, June 3, and traditionally there is a luncheon/tour on Saturday, June 2, at Hartford Hospital. If you have any other suggestions for our 50th Reunion please contact **Pat Andreana Ciarcia '62**: patciarcia@snet.net or 860-563-2005.

Linda Arle Duval '62 has been very busy working in Health Services at her local college, substituting as a school nurse in an elementary school, and working at flu clinics. In December, she and her husband became proud great-grandparents to their great-granddaughter, Addison.

Carol Drumm Ferrick '62 recently became a member of her church's Parish Nurses, a group that provides medical services and advice. She also is a member of a group who make prayer shawls for the elderly. She also volunteers at her granddaughter Kayleigh's school.

CLASS OF 1966

Charlotte Baribault Steele '66 is a high school nurse in Longmeadow, MA.

Alphie Plikaitis Junghans '66 is retired and plans to go to cooking school in Italy with her daughter in May. She is also a maniac knitter of beautiful articles.

Kitty Kirtland Phillips '66 is enjoying retirement.

Laraine Branciere Farabaugh '66 is retired along with her husband Hal and enjoys her 11 grandchildren who live nearby.

Sally Hersey Cassarino '66 retired last year and lives in California. Her daughter is a fine art photographer and her son is an MD, PhD in Dermatology. She enjoys spending time with her three grandchildren, and gardening is her hobby.

Lillian Rund Tibbles '66 remains in Florida teaching a psychiatry/mental health course at Florida Gulf Coast University. She loves semi-retirement and is able to spend time with her children, play golf, and read.

Carole Calkins Williams '66 remarried three years ago and is director of nurses at Maplewood Assisted Living of Danbury.

Lynn Buckley Barrett '66 is retired and has five grandchildren. She enjoys traveling overseas, gardening, quilting and volunteering. She hopes to move from MD to FL in a few years.

Patricia Kenny '66 is semi-retired as the executive director of a non-profit she co-founded 27 years ago. She had a billboard placed as a tribute to her in the community with a beautiful picture of herself and her accomplishments.

Susan Morse Cromie '66 is retired and living every minute exploring the world, enjoying her three granddaughters, hiking, quilting, skiing and boating.

Karen Hesketh '66 is retired and has cruised to Alaska, New Zealand, Australia and Hawaii within the last few years. In August she will be doing an ancestry tour with a friend to England, Ireland and Scotland.

Eunice French Ecker '66 is retired from nursing and caring for her two grandsons during the week.

Susan Hilton Latulippe '66 has moved to Hampton Beach, NH, and enjoys spending time with her grandchildren in MD.

Gail Pendleton Rapoza '66 is fully retired from HH Ortho Clinic as of May. She is enjoying her new grand puppy and is planning to travel.

Betty Ann Voce Fusco '66 is working per diem at HH and loves going to MD to see her three granddaughters.

CLASS OF 1967

Phyllis Weiner Demaine '67 was a 2011 candidate for Employee of the Year at Hartford Hospital. This award consists of an extensive peer nomination and selection process. Phyllis is a case manager in the Department of Nursing at Hartford Hospital.

CLASS OF 1969

Jean Bajek '69 is still working at CVS Pharmacy in Panama City Beach, FL. She visits her children and grandchildren in CT annually and also drives to Louisville, KY, every few months to share the joy of her rapidly growing baby grandson who recently turned 1 year old. Last July Jean saw in print her contribution to the book, *Miraculous Moments* by Elissa Al-Chokhachy.

CLASS OF 1972

Laura Caramanica '72 has been selected as president elect of the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) and will be president in 2012.

CLASS OF 1973

Catherine Matuszak Jeffery '73 recently received a Hartford Hospital chair for 40 years of service at Hartford Hospital.

CLASS OF 1974

Donna Shields Caplin '74 has completed her graduate research on veterans. This work was published in April as the chapter (6) "Coming Home: Examining the Homecoming Experiences of Young Veterans" in the book *Treating Young Veterans* (Springer). Her co-author is Katharine Kranz Lewis from the University of Hartford. Donna graduated from the University of Hartford in 2009 with an MSN in Community/Public Health.

CLASS OF 1976

Elaine Bailey McDunnah '76 is still working as an OR nurse at MidState Medical Center in Meriden, CT. Her oldest daughter, Jacqueline, got married in 2010 and lives in Wallingford. Elaine can be found on Facebook and would love to hear from her fellow 1976 HHSN classmates.

CORRECTION: The Fall 2010 *Nursing Magazine* incorrectly named the first male HHSN student nurse. It should have read that **Randall "Randy" Frederick Jenks** (1947-2003), Class of 1970, was the first male student to graduate from Hartford Hospital School of Nursing.



IN MEMORIAM

CLASS OF 1933

Mabel Cote Donald

CLASS OF 1939

Sylvia Rubin Frank

CLASS OF 1942

Bernice Goodman Lecuivre

CLASS OF 1943

Elizabeth Boothe Drogue

CLASS OF 1950

Katherine Moleske Kornitsky

CLASS OF 1952

Betty Bostleman Wilson Bomely

Elaine Sebastian Koen

Claire Quist Tetro St. Martin

CLASS OF 1954

Barbara McCurrey Bartley

CLASS OF 1957

Peggy Woltersdorf Polutchko

CLASS OF 1959

Sally Baxter Beck

PHYSICIANS

Dr. William E. Clark II, Pathologist

Dr. Thomas Donovan

Dr. Joseph Millerick

Dr. Morris Seide

Let Us Hear from You!

We would love to receive photos and news from HHSN alumnae. Please mail information to the Alumnae Association of the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing, 560 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106 or e-mail patciarcia@snet.net.

Request for HHSN Nursing Pins

We often receive requests for a replacement HHSN nursing pin. Since they are no longer made, the only way we can get one is if an alum is willing to donate her pin to the Alumnae Association. We would then give the pin to the alum who is requesting it. If you are interested in donating your pin for this purpose, please contact Pat Ciarcia at (860) 563-2005 or patciarcia@snet.net.

Give a Lasting Gift

Your contribution today will make a difference to our nursing education program. Mail your gift to Hartford Hospital, Fund Development, 80 Seymour Street, Hartford, CT 06102. You can act now and show your commitment to nursing education forever by including Hartford Hospital and/or the Alumnae Association of HHSN Inc. in your estate plans. For more information, please contact Carol S. Garlick, vice president, philanthropy, at (860) 545-2162 or cgarlic@harthosp.org.

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THE HAMILTON ARCHIVES AT HARTFORD HOSPITAL

A Hartford Hospital nurse provides care and comfort to a patient in a room of the High Building shortly after its 1948 opening.