

NEWS FROM NOVA

WINTER 2005

Volume 27

Number 1

Servant Leadership

By *Dianne Nelson, RN, BSN*



In my summer column, I shared with you some thoughts about leadership and how you can unleash your inherent abilities as a nurse and a leader. In this column, I would like to expand those ideas and explore a unique form of leadership—Servant Leadership. In 1970 Robert Greenleaf, a retired AT&T executive, proposed that *service* ought to be the distinguishing characteristic of leadership. You can imagine how this concept

shook up corporate America!

Greenleaf was challenging the “good-old-boy, claw-your-way-to-the-top” image of a leader. Instead, he proposed that a leader should be a servant first. He wrote: “It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant—first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served.

Greenleaf saw that traditional and hierarchical modes of leadership were slowly yielding to a newer model—one that attempts to simultaneously enhance the personal growth of workers and improve the quality and caring of our many institutions through a combination of teamwork and community, personal involvement in decision-making, and ethical and caring behavior.

I believe nurses have always been servant leaders, not as handmaidens to physicians, but as advocates for our patients, seeking better ways of working together, fostering a sense of community, supporting one another in enhancing personal and professional growth while improving the caring and quality of our institutions.

Let us explore the characteristics of servant leaders:

- **Calling:** Servant leaders are willing to sacrifice self-interests for the good of the group. They have a natural desire to serve others. This calling is deeply rooted and value-based. Servant leaders

Cont. on page 11

SAVE THE DATE!

April 26th - 29th, 2006

NOVA's 26th Annual Meeting in 2006 will take us to Miami Beach at the Wyndham Miami Beach Resort! Miami Beach offers a diversity of experiences such as the Art Deco District, Lincoln Road, Wolfsonian Museum, Parrot Jungle Island, and Little Havana in addition to great dining and an exciting nightlife.

The planning committee for the 2006 Annual NOVA Meeting has been hard at work planning an exciting and informative session entitled:

NOVA ON THE CREST OF HEALTHCARE

We'll explore current and future directions of VA healthcare and learn about the many great programs in place to meet the needs of our various veteran groups. In conjunction with the NOVA Foundation we're exploring options for social events, allowing members time to socialize and have a good time.

A call for poster presentations will be coming out in this newsletter but if anyone wants to get started, please contact **Joan Clifford**, program chair at joanco2149@comcast.net. We're hoping to hear about a lot of exciting programs/projects that members are involved in and will be having contests to pick the best presentations.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

INSIDE

CHAPTER NEWS	5
NOVA FOUNDATION	6
ANNUAL MEETING POSTER	7

Join us for NOVA's 26th Annual Meeting
in Miami, FL April 26-29, 2006

VA Nurses' Advocates in Washington

By Deborah Beck



The NOVA Board of Directors is dedicated to building partnerships with other VA professional associations, other nursing organizations and for-profit companies whose mission supports the nursing profession.

An exciting partnership has been formed with *Nursing Spectrum*, the leading source of

local and national nursing news, continuing education and career opportunities. These 13 regional magazines, websites and events reach more than one million nurses every two weeks. Their mission is to enrich the professional lives of nurses and celebrate their unique contributions to society.

Patti Rager, RN, President and Publisher, was first introduced to NOVA when she addressed the 15th Annual Meeting in Washington, DC in 1995. She was very impressed with the dedication of VA nurses, and in an effort to learn more about the nurses who care for our Nation's veterans, she visited the DC VA's hospice. Her devotion began at that time, has continued for the past ten years and is destined to grow dramatically as NOVA builds a partnership with *Nursing Spectrum*.

Nursing Spectrum and *Nurse's Week* is published bi-weekly and is distributed nationwide. **Terri Gaffney, RN, MPA**, Vice President of Professional and Editorial Services, is dedicated to learning more about VA nurses and communicating to the nursing community the activities, achievements and unique qualities of nurses who care for our Nation's veterans.

Cont. on page 12



VA Nurse Honored by *Nursing Spectrum/Nurse Week*

Bridget C. Maybury, MSN, RN, ANP, from the Bronx VAMC, recently won an award from *Nursing Spectrum*. Bridget, who is the Patient Safety Specialist, won the *Nursing Spectrum/Nurse Week* 2005 National Award in the Advancing Nursing Practice category. Her picture appeared on the cover of the magazines for the November 7, 2005 issue.

Highlights on Advanced Practice Nursing ANA Stakeholders Meeting on APNs September 26, 2005

By Beverly E. Ross, APRN, BC

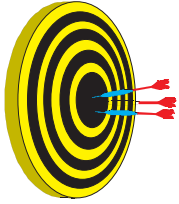
It was again an honor to represent the Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs at a national meeting. NOVA is in place, making history, giving you voice, and keeping the Department of Veterans Affairs in the know. Representatives attended this meeting from approximately fifty nursing organizations. We were not able to hear the wisdom of **Margretta Styles** due to her inability to make the scheduled flight to Silver Spring, MD. She did convey her best wishes to the group and plans to join us in the spring when another APN stakeholders meeting will be held.

ANA President **Barbara Blakeney** and **Jean Bartels**, President of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, gave a welcome. **Linda Shinn** served as facilitator of the discussion. **Jean Johnson**, facilitator for the APN Consensus Workgroup, gave an overview of the workgroup consensus process and report. The report is not yet final; a draft was shared but is not to be disseminated at this time. **Jean** defined consensus as a 2/3 majority of individuals present.

Key points

- The education requirement for the APN is a minimum of a master's degree. The practice doctorate may be a consideration for the future in terms of defining the advanced practice nurse.
- The use of the term APRN will be recommended as opposed to using APN because it builds on the RN competencies
- The Clinical Nurse Leader is NOT an advanced practice nurse role; this is considered to be a generalist; BSN competencies are required; master's preparation will be recommended as well.
- APRN title will not be seen as a substitute for the titles of CNS, NP, CNM, or CNA.
- For issues of pharmacology preparation, they are leaning toward all APRNs having pharmacology knowledge; prescriptive authority will not be required but the knowledge must be present. This key component of APRN is direct patient care.
- Discussion regarding competencies of the role vs. standardization occurred. Currently, there are no established national competencies for CNS; the NACNS is working on developing these.
- There was heavy discussion as well regarding determining what is a specialty as opposed to a subspecialty and the impact of subspecialties.

Cont. on page 12



On Target: Marlin and Waco Federal Medical Shelters (FMS)

By Cathy Rick, Christine Gregory,
Michael Grove and Rosemarie Paradis

Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, two Federal Medical Shelters (FMSs) were opened in partnership with Public Health Service Commissioned Corps and staffed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans Health Administration, at the Waco and Marlin campuses of the VA Central Texas Healthcare System. Evacuees (patients, families, and pets) from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita arrived by bus at the shelters carrying with them their few worldly possessions.

If you were among those VA nursing staff privileged to serve with this disaster relief effort, you were greeted on arrival with a great big welcome and thank you from VA's Chief Nursing Officer, Cathy Rick. Cathy along with Chris Gregory, Associate Director for Patient Care/Nursing Services at VA Central Iowa Health Care System, served as the Nurse Executives on the Waco medical shelter leadership team. Michael Grove and Rosemarie Paradis, Office of Nursing Services, program directors served as the Nurse Executives for the Marlin leadership team.

The Waco FMS was located on the grounds of an active VA facility in a fairly small metropolitan area of central Texas. The Marlin FMS was located in a small rural town, approximately 30 miles south of Waco in a VA facility that had been vacant for several years. Within a matter of a few short hours, these vacant buildings were fully operational as medical shelters thanks to the shared efforts of a talented team of individuals who came from across the country to serve their fellow citizens.

Evacuees were transported from other shelters in Louisiana and Texas and triaged by Public Health Service at a vacant Wal-Mart center in Waco. They were then transported to either Waco or the Marlin medical shelters; Waco was designated as "high" acuity and Marlin was "low" acuity. The medical shelters provided temporary housing for evacuees of Hurricane Rita and Hurricane Katrina who had special medical needs.

Prior to their arrival at the medical shelters, most evacuees were housed in various shelters throughout the state of Texas. The evacuees were ambulatory or wheelchair bound and had been living in a home setting or group home with various degrees of assistance prior to the devastation of the hurricanes. As evacuees homes became safe, or as they found relatives/friends willing to provide them

Cont. on page 13

NNEI Scholarship Program Alive and Well Post-Katrina

By Mary Raymer, RN
VHA Nursing Education Program Manager

The Healthcare Retention and Recruitment Headquarters Office (HRRO), which administers the National Nursing Education Initiative scholarship program has its office on 1555 Poydras Street in New Orleans. While the staff members have not been able to access their offices since August 29, 2005, they have continued to manage the HRRO programs which include NNEI, EISP, and EDRP, as well as the national recruitment program. Scattered from Texas to Washington to Florida, the staff is located in temporary offices pending repair/renovation of the New Orleans office. On September 2, 2005 facility coordinators were provided with an interim plan for the scholarship applicants and recipients. While the October application cycle was cancelled, HRRO will again accept applications beginning January 2006. HRRO has and will continue to collaborate with facility coordinators to resolve any issues created by the devastation of Katrina. While the majority of the HRRO staff suffered property losses ranging from damaged roofs to total loss of home, they are looking forward to returning to the New Orleans office hopefully in December of 2005. Since it's inception the EISP/NNEI program has provided scholarships to over 6000 VHA employees. HRRO staff looks forward to continuing the program and is appreciative of the messages of support and concern they have received from fellow VHA employees. If you are a current NNEI/EISP/EDRP recipient with questions/concerns or are interested in applying please contact your facility coordinator. If you do not know the name of your coordinator you should contact your facility education department who can direct you to the appropriate person.

BE A NEWS FROM NOVA REPORTER

News From NOVA would like to have news from each chapter. Write a few lines about what your chapter did this year and send a picture. Sharing what you do can provide recognition for your chapter as well as ideas for other chapters. The following are News From NOVA deadlines. Send the information by email to nancyclaflin@med.va.gov or nclaflin@cox.net

Mail to: Nancy Claflin
2237 E. Tahitian Way • Gilbert, AZ 85234
602 277-5551 ext.7333

Deadline Dates

January 31, 2006
May 13, 2006

August 11, 2006
November 18, 2006

Questions? Call me at 602 277-5551 x7333. Thank you for sharing your information with News From NOVA!

Baltimore Chapter 218By **Mike Holy**, RN, MS

Holiday Giving: Nurses, always leading with their hearts, traditionally try to give just a little more, it seems, during the holiday season. The NOVA 218 Chapter in Maryland normally expresses concern by collecting for a food basket, toys, and even clothing for a needy veteran and his or her family. Well, Katrina, a hurricane of immense proportions and effect, has, at least this year, changed the normal mode of holiday giving for the NOVA 218 Chapter nurses. Hitting as it did, so many here in the U.S., both directly, via its destruction down south, and indirectly, via the tugging at the heartstrings of those watching the devastation which was visited upon our southern neighbors nightly on the news, NOVA Chapter 218 has decided to also take direct action. This holiday, the giving will be directed towards one of our own, a New Orleans nurse, displaced, with four children, who just recently moved into the Baltimore area and is starting to work in the Maryland VA system. This is just another example of NOVA Chapter 218's well-documented responsiveness to community!

Nurses in the News: On a local level, please join us in congratulating two of our NOVA Chapter 218 nurses. First, **Ms. Shelly Epps** was appointed as Permanent Charge Nurse for 5BS - Acute Care Surgical Ward. And under what can ONLY be listed as either, just simply "WOW," or "UP and Coming and Take Notice NOW," **Janice Arceneaux** was inducted into Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing in May 2005, appointed as a University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) Senator to represent students university-wide on a local and state level, voted as a UMB board member of University Student Governance Association to advocate for students university-wide over the issues, concerns, and rights of students to community and political organizations and fee committees, and was also recently selected for the positions of Junior Clinical Instructor and Teaching Assistant for UMB Bachelor of Science Nursing students.

Denver Chapter 144By **Marian Allen & Marti Crockett**

Chapter members have been engaged in numerous veteran-related activities over the last few months. NOVA nurses were part of the volunteer medical support team for the 58th Annual ex-POW Conference held in Denver September 28th-October 1st. A memorable experience was expressed by those participating and meeting this unique and special group of veterans.

ECHCS hosted the 2005 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival also held in Denver from October 17th-23rd. The participants are 1st place winners in the veterans' national competition in both visual and performing arts. They were invited to take part in the week-long festival. NOVA nurses helped staff the 24/7 first aid station and accompanied the

Chapter News



veteran artists on community excursions.

NOVA nurses marched and passed out fliers in the Veterans Day Parade held in Downtown Denver on a cold and snowy Saturday. NOVA nurses were on site at the Veterans Homeless Stand Down held on November 10th. The NP's did screening exams and blood pressure checks, and the RN's gave needed immunizations and HIV screenings/counseling.

The ECHCS Women Veterans Coordinator, **Linda Rawers ANP**, along with other NOVA nurses, hosted the 11th Annual Women Veterans Gala held in the medical center auditorium on November 12th. NOVA nurses provided educational materials, immunizations, answered questions, and assisted with food preparation.

The chapter meets every other month over the lunch hour with excellent participation. Lunch is provided with chapter funds. The chapter continues its endeavor to retain and recruit members with outreach efforts expanding throughout VISN 19.

Chapter 144 members will take a short break to enjoy the holidays. Have a great holiday season and the best to you all in 2006!

Miami Chapter 164By **Lee Fealy**

As you are aware, we have just experienced hurricane Wilma. Fortunately, the damage, while extensive, mainly affected landscaping. The Wyndham Hotel came through just fine, and by April, we will be ready, willing, and able to host NOVA's annual meeting. Presently, we are holding flea markets and other fund raising events in order to donate a scholarship in **Jeannette Siler's** name to NOVA. Anyone who knew **Jeannette** knows what an emphasis she placed on education, and we would like to think she would be pleased to know another nurse benefited in her name. To donate, you may get in touch with me. We are attempting to line up a dinner cruise for the Friday evening of the annual meeting at a much reduced rate, and are planning to host a hospitality suite, so look forward to many wonderful events in addition to the great seminars. Speaking for myself, there are wonderful friendships to be gained by attending the convention. I am looking forward to meeting you all.

Richmond Chapter 420By **Landis Shepherd**

Once again we approach the Holiday

Season with the holiday unique to the United States of America, THANKSGIVING. Just this week I sat in the food court (with my VETERAN husband) of one of the many malls in Richmond and listened to the stories of veterans who gather there each day beginning at 9am. Each one has a unique story for the unique country they have served. It is a joy to THANK each one personally for the unique service they have provided. Take a moment in your hectic schedule to think of the men and women who have served and come home whole; the men and women who have served and paid the ultimate price; the men and women who have served and returned broken. We have THE vocation and THE position to be able to do just that daily. We have the opportunity to write our elected officials and demand that appropriate funding be made available for the care of OUR veterans. Unique. It just doesn't happen like this in other parts of the world.

Chapter 420 has 65 members and we're still growing. Do we have "growing pains?" You bet! However, every member is working diligently to build up our chapter and maintain the goals we have achieved. NOVA members are active in many hospital and community activities. Each October, the Women Veterans Program supports the research for a cure for breast cancer. Without the strong support of NOVA members this probably would not take place, and the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation would have to look in a new direction for additional funding.

Our chapter offers educational programs open to all VA employees several times a year. **Robyn Moorhead**, financial planner, funded our off-site education program this fall. **Robyn** has been extremely supportive of Chapter 420 members and their guests. So many VA employees are unaware of the benefit of financial planning. **Robyn** knows our system inside and out and is able to help guide VA employees to make the best decisions to meet their goals.

Sylvia Johns, Chapter 420 treasurer, is currently in the position of acting nurse manager on the Polytrauma Unit. You will have the opportunity to hear **Sylvia** speak at the Annual Meeting in Florida in April. The Polytrauma Program is a new concept pulling together the more established programs for Traumatic Brain Injury and new concepts incorporating a more holistic approach.

Chapter 420 is honored to have **Cathy Rick**, Chief Nursing Officer, as our guest presenter for our holiday program in December. We wish that each and every one of you could be with us as she shares current information from inside the beltway. When the next newsletter comes out, we hope to be able to give you an outline of her presentation.

In the meantime, stay strong to your call. And, celebrate the holiday season in an environment of freedom.

From the Chairperson, NOVA Foundation

By Jayma Hall, RN, MSN, CNA, BC



Jayma Hall, NOVA
Foundation Chair

I am writing this article on a lovely October day with the New England foliage at its peak, but when you receive the NOVA newsletter it will be winter and the holiday season of Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukah, Ramadan and New Year's will be behind us. During the holiday season many people give gifts to people who are special to them. I hope VA nurses are on your list and that you consider a gift to them, through a donation to the NOVA Foundation.

That gift will enable the NOVA Foundation to continue to support VA nurses' education and research. The generosity of those who receive this newsletter is very much appreciated. We will continue to need your support in the New Year.

In 2005, The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) celebrated its 75th anniversary of commitment to serving veterans who have gallantly served our nation in times of peace and war. VA nurses have been a major part of that 75-year commitment by providing excellent nursing care to veterans. The NOVA Foundation also has made a commitment to veterans and VA nurses. The NOVA Foundation is committed to ensure that current and future veterans receive outstanding healthcare. The NOVA Foundation Board members are working hard toward our goals to fund VA nurses to advance nursing practice and research to improve healthcare unique to veterans such as PTSD, Physical and Mental Rehabilitation, Diabetes, and Long Term Care. In order to be successful with our goals, we need the continued support from VA nurses, veterans, their families and the general public.

The support from NOVA Chapters and VA nurses is important to the Foundation's ability to accomplish their mission. Donations given by VA nurses are returned to VA nurses when the Foundation awards scholarships for education and research grants. As you know the NOVA Foundation has made a commitment to increase the number of scholarships for VA nurses. In order to recognize support from NOVA Chapters to the NOVA Foundation, we have introduced the following programs:

NOVA Chapters with 30% of their membership who donate to the NOVA Foundation

NOVA Chapters that have 30% of their membership making donations by March 15, 2006 will receive special recognition at NOVA's 26th Annual Meeting in April 2006 in Miami, Florida. If 30 percent of a chapter's membership makes an individual contribution to the NOVA Foundation, that chapter will be recognized at the Annual Meeting Awards Breakfast. A photograph will be taken with the NOVA Foundation Board and chapter members present at the meeting. Additionally, the chapter will be presented with a certificate. The period for these donations will be January 1 - March 31, 2006.

NOVA Chapters making a contribution to the NOVA Foundation in the name of a deserving nurse colleague (minimum donation of \$150)

Chapters will develop their own criteria for the nomination of individuals to be recognized. These individuals will be listed in each issue of the newsletter and will be included in the Annual Meeting program as well as on the website. The individuals recognized will also be presented with a certificate during the Annual Meeting Awards Breakfast in April 2006.

Help the NOVA Foundation help VA nurses, caring for our American Heroes, continue to make the VA healthcare system the finest in America. Donations can be sent to the NOVA Foundation, 1726 M Street, NW, Suite 1101, Washington, DC 20036. You can also donate or purchase VA Nurses **Caring for America's Heroes Bumper Stickers** through the NOVA web site www.nova@vanurse.org or contacting the NOVA Foundation National Office at 202-296-0888.

NOVA Foundation Donation Summary Donations Received between 1/1/05 and 11/22/05

\$1,000 CONTRIBUTION	Tampa Chapter	Eric Rodgers
\$500-\$750 CONTRIBUTION	Jayma Hall	Christine M. Ryan
	Palo Alto Chapter	UP TO \$49 CONTRIBUTION
\$250 - \$499 CONTRIBUTION	Catherine Bailey	Janice Arceneaux
	Marie Basti	Linda-Dell Archuleta
	Nancy Clafin	Deborah Armay
	Vincent Elliott	Georgia Barkers
	Erie Chapter	Nina Bellatorre
	Ronald Hopper	Karen M. Brown
	Margaret Kruckemeyer	Providencia Cardona
	Larry Lemos	Kimberly Champaigne
	Ronald Dean Patrick	Mary Cook
\$100 - \$249 CONTRIBUTION	Patricia Alves	Rosemary Connors
	Betty Baldwin	Eloy A. de Jesus
	Joan Clifford	Veronica F. Elliott
	Audrey Drake	Connie M. Friend
	Vernice Ferguson	Nellie K. Geraci
	Margaret Freda	Fe Goldberg
	Nancy A. Haliskoe	Ernestine Goode
	Mary Haubold	Mary Latin Hampton
	Lucy V. Holt	Kathy Hay
	Linda Johnson	Marion A. Henning
	Anna L. Jones	Joyce K. Holohan-Bell
	Joycelyn King	Genevieve Huerstel
	Cheryl Knowles	Joy Ilem
	Frankie T. Manning	Paul J. Johnson
	Claudette Morrisey	Cherrie Lee
	Dianne Nelson	Katayama
	Richmond Chapter	Nancy J. Krokosky
	Maude Rittman	Patricia Krull
	Beverly E. Ross	Judith Levernier
	Kay Schroer	Cecilia Manaog
	Lynna Smith	Dennis McCurdy
	Noreen M. Sommer	Christine Meyer
	Topeka Chapter	Christine Mladineo
	Tucson Chapter	Sarah Myers
	Mark Vakkur	Tammy Mosher
	Phyllis West	Beth Muenchrath
\$75 - \$99 CONTRIBUTION	Earline L. Bryan	Evelyn S. Otero-Ruiz
	Patricia Corkery	Melvin James Pruitt
\$50 - \$74 CONTRIBUTION	Laura Bostic	Susan Pye
	Lula B. Cumberlander	Nancy E. Reagan
	Mattie D. Davis	Judith Rosen
	Velma Hart	Ernestine Steiner
	Marsha Rasmussen	Joaleen Swanson
	Mary Raymer	Costellia Talley
		Henry Talley
		Susan N. Vickory
		Virginia Vizconde
		Teresa Weaver
		Sharon Williams
		Lou Willis

NOVA Foundation Honorees

IN HONOR OF JEAN REVAK, RN
Erie, Pennsylvania VA Medical Center

The colleagues of **Jean Revak, RN** donate \$250 to the NOVA Foundation to honor her nearly 40 years of service at the Erie, Pennsylvania VAMC. **Jean** retired from the VA on September 30, 2005. The majority of her nursing career was dedicated to caring for our veterans. She served in many roles during her tenure at the medical center. For many years, **Jean** was head nurse of the surgical unit where she mentored all levels of nursing. She worked closely with and earned the respect of physicians and other allied health care professionals. **Jean** also worked in nursing education, utilization review and was instrumental in implementing a wound clinic. She was sought out by her peers for her expertise in all aspects of nursing and always put her patients and staff first. We have been honored to call **Jean** a colleague and friend, and the veterans have been fortunate to call her nurse.



SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORSHIP
in the name of
GLHN ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS, INC.

President Dianne Nelson's husband's company, GLHN Architects & Engineers, was established in 1963. It is an employee-owned, multidiscipline firm of more than 40 full-time employees.

GLHN works for major universities through the West and Midwest, large governmental agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs and Bureau of Land Management, local municipalities, and clients in private industry like Qwest/AT&T and Grubb & Ellis.

A special thanks to GLHN for sponsoring two \$1,500 NOVA Foundation scholarships for the 2005/06 academic year.



A SCHOLARSHIP IN HONOR
of DIANNE NELSON, RN, BSN

GLHN Architects & Engineers is honoring President **Dianne Nelson** with a scholarship in her name. She has been on the NOVA Board of Directors since 1997 and has worked tirelessly to enhance health care in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Dianne graduated from the University of Arizona with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1973 and immediately began her nursing career at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System in Tucson. **Dianne** is a staff nurse in the Telehealth Program.

Dianne has been an active NOVA Member since 1992, serving as Tucson Chapter President, and then joining the National Board of Directors in 1997. She has been NOVA's Membership Secretary and the Editor of the NOVA publications, *NEWS FROM NOVA*, *Legislatively Speaking* and the Membership Directory. She has served as Vice President, President-Elect, and President. Additionally, she serves on the Veterans Health Administration Registered Nurse Qualification Standards Implementation Steering Committee.

In all of her NOVA roles, **Dianne** strives to provide services that will keep NOVA members interested, energized and engaged.

Cont. on page 12

NOVA Annual Poster Session

Thursday April 27, 2006

Deadline for Proposal: March 15, 2006

All Nurses, Nursing Students and Other Health Care Professionals are invited to submit a poster proposal on any aspect of their practice, research, or student activities. Share your creative nursing care approaches, research finds, clinical innovations or student projects.

Poster Criteria

- A summarization of a creative activity; may include handouts
- Fits on a poster board measuring approximately 30"x 36" & on an easel
- Reflect innovative aspect of nursing practice, education, research
- Presenter **MUST** be available for the open poster session to address questions

Each poster submission will be reviewed for the following elements: quality, broad appeal to the nursing community, creativity, timeliness, and

uniqueness. **YOU MUST BE PRESENT AT THE CONFERENCE.**

How to submit a poster proposal

- Email or fax the following information no later than March 15, 2006 to **Joan Clifford** at joanco2149@comcast.net
- Poster title & description, developer's name and credentials, objective statement & mailing address, zip, phone, and fax.

You will be notified by April 1, 2006 regarding the acceptance of your poster.

Posters must avoid commercialism, promotion and advertising. Statements made in posters are the sole responsibility of the author/presenter. Posters should not be viewed as, or considered representative or, any formal stance or position taken on any subject, issue or product by NOVA.

Welcome Aboard New Members 9/1/05 - 11/28/05

ANN ARBOR, MI

Marjorie Ferguson
Cynthia Gruden
ATLANTA, GA
Edna Delois Fleming
Marquetta Kay Wriston
AUGUSTA, GA
Mary K. Maeve
Bobbie Sue Oglesby Johnson

BALTIMORE, MD

Valerie Davis

BEDFORD, MA

Kathleen Lehman

BOSTON, MA

Karen Boenig
Kathleen Crowley
Judy Doroski
Xionara Espinal
Kathleen Grant
James McLaughlin
Thankamma Pillai
Heather Slaney
Irina Turovskaya

BROCKTON/WEST ROXBURY, MA**BURY, MA**

Maria Cerro
Kathryn Cheever
Lula Cumberlander

CINCINNATI, OH

Angela Richardson

CLEVELAND, OH

Angela Brazile
Sally Salatsky

COLUMBIA, SC

Manuela Cantu
Kimberly Champaigne
Earnestine Kinloch
Janice Skipper

COLUMBUS, OH

Camille Obanmia

DAYTON, OH

Diane Ejajic
Jayme Fugate
Donna Habig
Marie Sasse
Carric Washington
Nancy White

DENVER, CO

Aleashia Bess

HOUSTON, TX

Melvin Pruitt

KANSAS CITY, MO

Sharon Pietarila

MANCHESTER, NH

Karen Lebrun

MARION, IL

Brenda McCall

MIAMI, FL

Cynthia Andely
Myrtha Gheusneaud
Magdline Jenkins
M. Lambert-Sylvestre
Avelina Mercado
Raquel Pastor-Rojas
Joni Rodda
Sandra Romo
Carmen Rosado
Carlos Rosario-Colon
Ala Shkolnik
Pamela Sims
Cheryl Smith
Beny Valde
Jamie Valentin

MILWAUKEE, WI

Mary Carlson
Kathleen Gotz

MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Peter Mitchell
Lori Pawelski

NEW YORK, NY

Theresa Roman

NORTHAMPTON, MA

Laura-Ann Kadlewicz

PALO ALTO, CA

Peggy Berry
Susan Bertlaeachi-Green

PHOENIX, AZ

Cherylette Prophet

PROVIDENCE

Nadine Blanchett
Eric Paquet

SALEM VAMC

Bridgett Helms
Karen Olicweir

ST. LOUIS, MO

Kathy Conway

TUCSON VAMC

Troy Allen
Jo Ann Clark
Steven Hluderman
Laura Montano
Helen Markussen
Muriel Rosenfeld
Debara Smith
Michelle Throckmorton

TOPEKA, KS

Christiane Colbert
Maria Stamper
Diane Zajic

WACO, TX

Kathryn McNair

WASHINGTON DC

Veronica Long
Nadine Nolan

WEST LOS ANGELES, LA

Pam Harris
Elizabeth Santana

WEST PALM BEACH, FL

Yvette Hill
Susan Van Wyk

WILMINGTON, DE

Diane McGrellis

Treasure Trove

NOVA nurses have many hidden treasures. Please help us locate one of the hidden treasures at your VA facility. Many of our VA nurses are considered authentic "gems." The Treasure Trove corner is a token of our appreciation, and in each newsletter issue we will showcase one of our seasoned VA nurses – a magnificent one-of-a-kind jewel. Join us in the NOVA treasure hunt...your nurse gem may be hidden on the night or evening shift and/or perhaps has been a mentor or a preceptor to newer VA nurses or may even be retired from VA.

Submissions can be sent to **Cheryl Knowles** by email at CAKnowles@stny.rr.com and should include the following information from completing a brief interview with your gem: RN or APN name and credentials, VA facility, years of service, why they chose nursing as a profession, what made them seek employment at VA, and their most memorable experience as a VA nurse.

Hidden Treasure

By Patricia Case



I am naming **Donna Mathews, RN, BSN**, as a hidden treasure at the Bath VA in VISN 2. She has been a VA employee since 1987, and is currently the nurse manager of NHCU-2. **Donna** loves the geriatric population and became interested in nursing as her parents became older. Wanting to help others sounds like a cliché, but this is what she wanted to do, and she does it well. **Donna** cites being named nurse manager as her most memorable experience as a VA nurse as it provided her the opportunity to be creative and innovative with a unit. She is always open to new ideas and not afraid to be unique when she feels it will benefit her staff or the residents on the unit. She is very much appreciated.

Honoring NOVA's Treasures: Friends, Family Members, Colleagues

NOVA nurses have many treasures. Your treasures may include valued NOVA members, colleagues, and mentors as well as friends, family members and other treasures in your life. Would you like to honor one of those treasures? Consider making a donation to the NOVA Foundation in his/her name. This donation will be listed on a plaque that is displayed at all NOVA and NOVA Foundation events. It will also be included in the newsletter as well as in the Annual Meeting program booklet. One of NOVA's founders, **Tom Fiala**,

Cont. on page 12

MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGNS

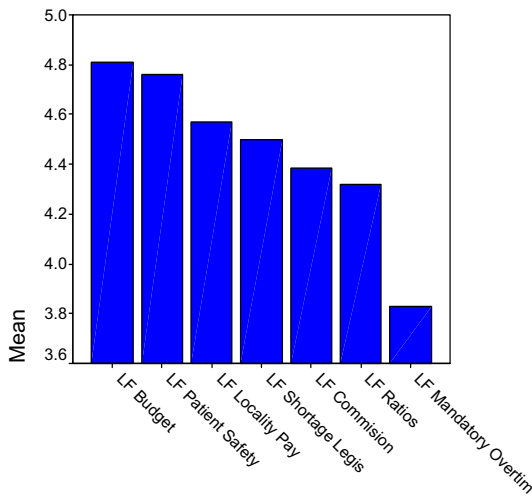
As all of us in NOVA know, it takes strong membership to have a strong organization. Every VA nurse should be a member of NOVA. NOVA is committed to continuing to increase membership. NOVA is our voice in Washington, and NOVA's voice is clearly heard! The Member-Get-A-Member Campaign is ongoing. To determine rewards and awards, we are using the dates from May 1, 2005 through April 1, 2006. If you sign up 5 new members, your **MEMBERSHIP** is **FREE** for the next year! Sign up 15 new members, and you'll get a **FREE conference registration for 2006!** Sign up 25 new members, and you'll get a **FREE Conference Registration and three nights' hotel FREE at the conference in 2006!** Based on feedback we've received from members, **you no longer need to send all the applications together.** Send your list of new NOVA members to joyross@vanurse.org, and you'll get credit for the membership when the names appear in the NOVA database. Joy will contact you about your rewards. Some chapters have used the free membership as a give-away to entice new members. Encourage everyone at your facility to sign up 5 new members this year!

NOVA will also be awarding membership awards in three categories at the annual meeting in Miami in 2006 for those chapters who have had the greatest increase in membership numbers from May 1, 2005 through April 1, 2006. The chapter size for the membership awards will be as follows: Small--up to 25; Medium--26-99; Large--100 or greater. If you would like help in setting up a NOVA Chapter, contact me at nclafin@cox.net and we'll get you in touch with a member of NOVA's Membership Committee.

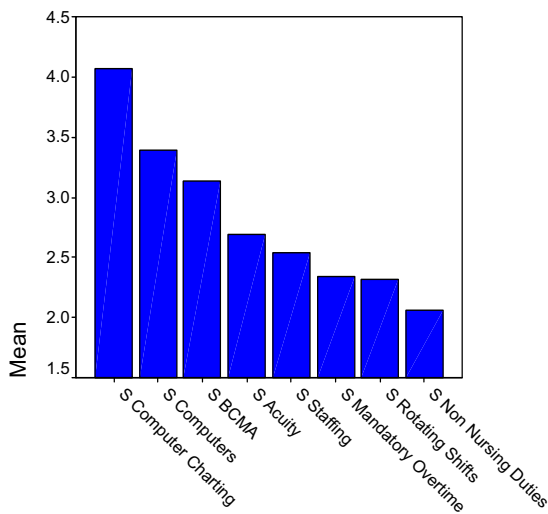
NOVA Membership Survey Summary 2005

A NOVA membership survey was placed on the NOVA web site in October. As of November 24, 2005, approximately 8% of the membership completed the survey.

When asked to rate legislative topics that NOVA should focus on for the 2006 legislative session, the most highly rated topic was adequate budget for VHA at 4.8, followed by patient safety, locality pay, legislative related to the nursing shortage, National Commission on VA Nursing recommendations, mandatory nurse-patient ratios, and mandatory overtime.

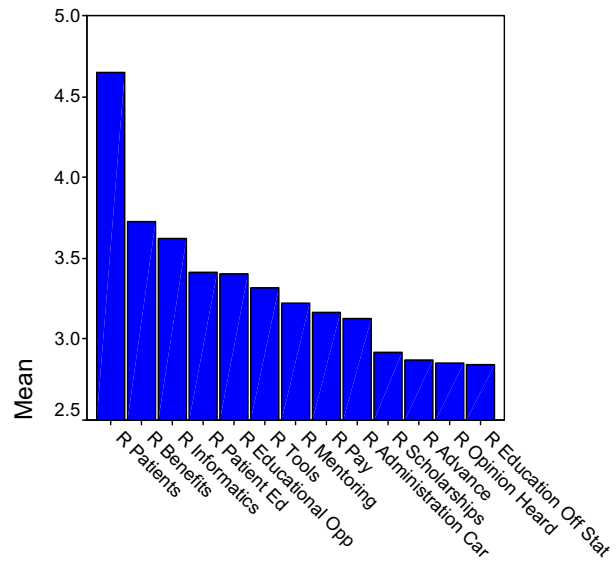


When asked to rate their satisfaction level from 1 (frustrating) to 5 (satisfied) respondents identified computerized charting as the most frustrating at 4.07. This was followed by numbers of computers, BCMA, patient acuity, staffing, mandatory overtime, rotating shifts, and performing non-nursing duties.

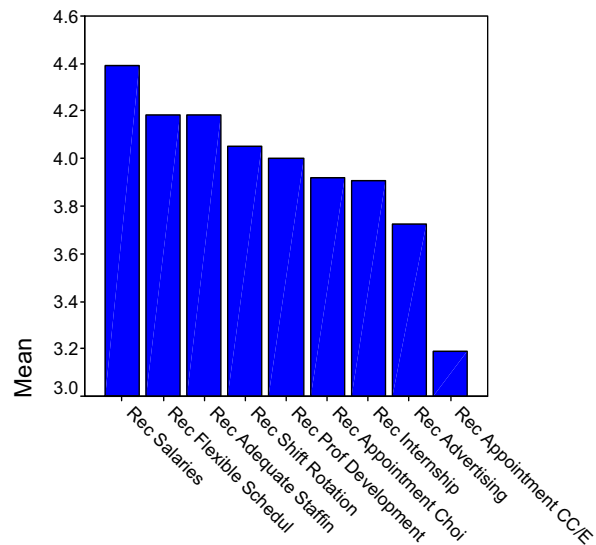


When asked to rate topics from 1 (not rewarding) to 5 (extremely rewarding), the veteran patient was rated the highest at 4.66. This was followed by VA benefits, state-of-the-art informatics,

patient/family education, educational opportunities on station or online, having needed tools, mentoring new nurses, VA pay, administration cares about patients, availability of scholarship money, ability to advance in leadership roles, having opinions heard, and ability to attend educational offerings off station.

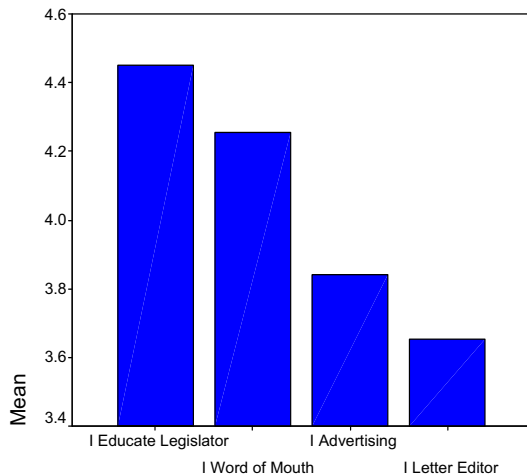


When asked to rate topics in terms of impact on VHA recruitment from 1 (no impact) to 5 (very important impact), the topic rated with the highest impact was salaries competitive with the private sector at 4.39. All topics were rated above 3.5. The topics in descending order were flexible work schedules (such as the Baylor plan, part-time employment, alternate shifts), adequate staffing to eliminate unwanted overtime, elimination of shift rotation, specific professional development benefits (pre-determined amount of authorized absence and funds for continuing education), appointment to clinical area of choice, internship (formal preceptor program of 3-9 months duration), advertising in

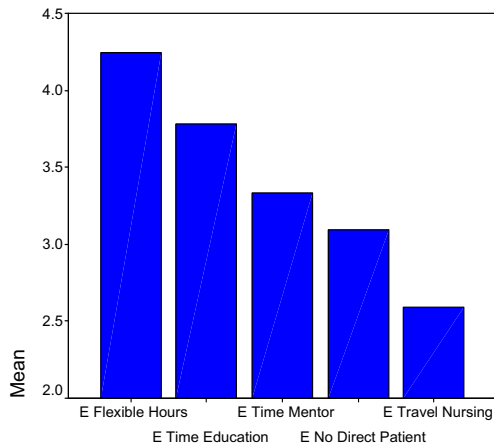


professional journals and local newspapers that reflect the innovative nursing practices in VHA, and appointment to critical care or emergency room as a new graduate

When asked to rate topics as important to improving the image of VA nursing from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important), educating legislators was the top rated topic at 4.45. Again, all topics were rated higher than 3.5. Other topics were word of mouth by current VHA nurses, advertising in professional and non-professional magazines, and letters to the editors of local newspapers.



Because many VA nurses are eligible to retire now, or will become eligible in the next five years, respondents were asked to rate enticements to stay in VHA nursing from 1 (would not stay) to 5 (would stay). The top enticement was flexible working hours, at 4.24. This was followed by time off for education, adequate time to mentor new nurses, a position without direct patient care, and the ability to do travel nursing.



When asked about a travel nurse corps, 43.0% of the respondents indicated they would be interested, 33.5% indicated they wouldn't be interested, and 23.5% indicated they didn't know.

Nurses were also asked if they felt that VHA nursing salaries were competitive with the private sector. Of the respondents, 35.7% felt they were

competitive; 57.0% felt they were not competitive, and 7.3% didn't know.

When asked if they felt that their facility would meet the criteria for the ANA award of Magnet status, 20.4% indicated they would meet the criteria; 68.7% indicated they wouldn't meet the criteria, and 10.9% indicated they didn't know.

When asked if they felt they had the ability to make a difference in legislative areas, a majority of nurses (63.9%) responded that they did; 23.5% responded that they didn't; and 12.6% didn't know.

It was interesting to note that when asked how many days per month they had to stay at work to cover patient care needs, 32.6% indicated that they stayed 1-4 days per month, and another 27.8% indicated that they stayed more than 4 days per month, with 39.6% indicating that they didn't stay.

NOVA members also identified other areas of concern, and provided other suggestions and ideas. Areas of concern included lack of involvement in discharge planning and patient education, lack of time for patient care, lack of staffing, mandatory overtime, complicated proficiency system, inadequate locality pay, lack of funds for off-site education, seniority allocation for leave, pre-selection for positions, lack of recognition, and bed shortages.

Suggestions for improvement included health insurance premiums paid in full for retired nurses who worked a minimum of 16-20 hours per week, granting annual leave during holidays, providing time away from patient care for projects, holding open houses to improve VA's image, elimination of floating and mandatory shift rotation, lift teams, ancillary support 24/7 (pharmacy, laboratory, physical therapy, radiology); funds for continuing education, revision of locality pay to include specialty pay for key roles, dental insurance, shared governance, more steps in grades 2 and 3, more space and more computers.

Specific comments were made by many NOVA members. The following quotes provide a sample of the comments made. "Unless changes in the internal culture and opportunities for advancement are realized by the staff nurse, the VA will experience a critical shortage of available nurses. Nurses simply will not wait for the VA to change. They will follow the competition looking for an improved workplace. The VA will never achieve Magnet designation unless they dramatically alter the dynamics seen between management and staff."

"Sell the point that privatizing VA care would cost the federal government 20% more than it is spending currently. Sell the point that VA health care is saving the country at least \$5 billion besides serving for non-appropriated services as national disaster coverage, as well as providing health care education for over 550,000 students, including resident positions paid for out of VA budgets."

"Most nurses are very well paid and are in the VA because they want to serve veterans."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *cont. from page 1*

have a desire to make a difference for other people and will pursue opportunities to impact others' lives—never for their own gain. This characteristic cannot be taught, but it can be enhanced through study and personal development.

- **Listening:** Leaders have traditionally been valued for their communication and decision-making skills. Servant leaders take this skill to another level; they are excellent listeners. They are receptive and genuinely interested in the views and input of others. Listening, coupled with periods of reflection, is essential to the growth of the servant leader.
- **Empathy:** The servant leader strives to understand others and empathize with them—patients and co-workers. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits. Empathy is defined as “entering fully, through imagination, into another’s feelings or motives.” The basis of empathy is *pathos*, the Greek word for feeling, emotion, and suffering.
- **Healing:** Learning to heal is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant leadership is its potential for healing one’s self and others. Many of our patients have broken spirits and have suffered a variety of emotional hurts. Servant leaders have an opportunity to make whole those with whom they come in contact. They are good at facilitating the healing process and others gravitate toward them when emotional needs arise. Servant leaders create an environment that encourages emotional mending.
- **Awareness:** General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant leader. Awareness also aids one in understanding issues involving ethics and values. The inner serenity of a servant leader lends itself to viewing most situations from a more integrated, holistic position. Servant leaders have a keen sense for what is happening around them; they are always looking for cues from the environment to inform their opinions and decisions.
- **Persuasion:** Another characteristic of servant leaders is a primary reliance on persuasion, rather than the use of personal authority, in making decisions. They are naturally very persuasive and offer compelling reasons when they make requests. They never force others to do things and they are very good at building consensus within groups.
- **Conceptualization:** Servant leaders nurture the ability to conceptualize the world, events, and possibilities. They encourage others to dream great dreams and think beyond day-to-day realities and operations. They foster an environment that encourages thinking big and valuing the creative process.
- **Foresight:** Servant leaders have an uncanny ability to anticipate future events. This is not to say they are psychic or always right, but they are adept

at picking up patterns in the environment and seeing what the future will bring. They usually anticipate consequences of decisions with great accuracy because they understand the actions from the past, the realities of the present and the likely consequences of a decision for the future.

- **Stewardship:** Stewardship can be defined as “holding something in trust for another.” Stewardship assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others and making a positive difference in the future. It emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion rather than control.
- **Growth:** Servant leaders are deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within their sphere of influence. They believe all people have something to offer beyond their tangible contributions. Servant leaders work hard to help people in a number of ways—spiritually, professionally, and personally.
- **Building Community:** Servant leaders have a strong sense of community spirit and work hard to foster it in an organization or workplace. They believe that people bring their heart and souls to work, not just their heads and hands.

As you can see, what makes a leader a “servant leader” is not temperament, strength, or energy. What makes a servant leader is first and foremost the type of motivation in the leader. When the motivation of the leader is to unleash the potential of the followers and primarily benefit the needs of the organization, that person is a servant leader.

Servant leaders believe that growth and development of these characteristics is an on-going, life-long learning process. Servant leadership crosses all boundaries and is being applied by a wide variety of people working within a myriad of institutions and organizations. The seeds planted by Greenleaf 35 years ago have sprouted in many institutions, as well as in the hearts of many who long to improve the human condition. Servant leadership truly offers hope and guidance for a new era in human development and a prescription for creating healthy organizations. Leadership is not an affair of the head. Leadership is an affair of the heart.

The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test is: do those served grow as persons: do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?

The Servant as Leader
Robert K. Greenleaf
www.greenleaf.org

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR *cont. from page 3*

- Communicate chapter activities in your regional issue of *Nursing Spectrum* or *Nurses Week*. Publicize an annual meeting; announce the election of board of directors, a new position for a colleague or a new program at your facility. It is easy to share information with nurses in your community. You can go directly to nursingspectrum.com or use the link on the NOVA website.
- Submit articles for publication on either a regional or national basis. National attention is focusing on the war in Iraq as our legislators debate whether or not we should continue our efforts in the region. *Nursing Spectrum* editors are very interested in articles about health care issues impacting these dedicated military personnel, including PTSD, prosthetics, and transition from active duty to veteran status. Send your articles using the website.
- Nominate one of your extraordinary colleagues for an award in one of the following categories: advancing and leading the profession; clinical care; community service; management; mentoring; and teaching. *Nursing Spectrum* has created this national program to recognize nurses who make a contribution to their patients, each other and the profession. Make your nominations online.

The partnerships NOVA is building need the support of the membership and will only be as strong as the participation nationwide. I encourage you to publicize your special activities, your special colleagues, and special insights into the care of veterans.

Not only am I excited about this partnership, but I want to especially thank *Nursing Spectrum* for sponsoring the 2005/06 Jesse Brown Scholarship.

HIGHLIGHTS *cont. from page 3*

Next Steps

- Clarification of only one exam, testing in the specialty
- CNS roles, specialties, competencies
- Regulatory process- issues
- Pharmacology clarification
- Work during the year and planning to meet in the spring

As you can see, the process takes time. The group wants to ensure that we have the clearest document possible so that these issues are understood by all elements of nursing. NOVA is in place to be a part of nursing history.

Please let me know if there is something you would like to hear more about for the next newsletter. I am interested in hearing from you. Feel free to send me an e-mail at beverly.ross@med.va.gov.

HONOREES *cont. from page 7***A CONTRIBUTION IN HONOR
of THOMAS F. FIALA, RN**

Thomas F. Fiala's family made a \$50 contribution to the NOVA Foundation in honor of his passing on April 5, 2005. He was born in 1925 and worked at the Hines VA from 1960 to 1985.

Tom was one of the founders of NOVA and wrote the first draft of the NOVA Articles of Incorporation and bylaws in the spring of 1980. He served two terms as the First Vice President and was on the Board since its inception. He served on the Historical Committee, the "Adopt a Chapter" Committee and many others. He received the 1985 Barbara Chambers Award as part of the NOVA Founder's Group. He declined to serve as an officer in 1984 because of his pending retirement from the VA in January 1986. As an anecdote for NOVA's 1st Annual Meeting in 1981 at the Bismarck Hotel in Chicago, he had to write a personal check to cover the hotel deposit. He was later reimbursed, but it demonstrates his commitment to NOVA.

His daughter, **Marsha Rasmussen**, says, "I am very proud of my Dad and his accomplishments in the VA service and with NOVA."

HONORING NOVA'S TREASURES *cont. from page 8*

recently passed away, and his family made a donation in his name. A chapter can also make a donation to the NOVA Foundation in honor of a retiring colleague.

The NOVA Foundation grants scholarships to VA nurses to advance their education. Research grants fund nurse investigators who are researching ways to improve the care to our veteran patients. Send your donation to the NOVA Foundation, 1726 M Street, NW, Suite 1101, Washington, DC 20036. Please let us know who you are honoring and why. This will be published in NEWS FROM NOVA. For more information on honoring an individual, please contact the NOVA Foundation National Office at the above address, or by calling 202-296-0888.

**Letters to the Editor**

This is your newsletter!

What did you like?

What article would you like to comment on?

What thoughts would you like to share to make our publication more relevant to your nursing practice or your NOVA chapter?

Send us your responses: NOVA@vanurse.org

We will publish responses on the webpage and in the next newsletter. Read, reflect, and react today!

ON TARGET: MARLIN AND WACO *cont. from page 4*

housing, they were discharged from the shelters. The majority of the evacuees wanted to return to their previous environment.

Clinical services at the shelters were provided by interdisciplinary teams. Services included psychosocial, medical, family unit and recreational support. It was impressive to see the VA team in action as they focused on safety issues and well-known VA quality initiatives. The many system-wide innovations that VA staff are recognized for were put into action at these shelters. The staff of the shelter consisted of volunteers from VA facilities across the country and they came with a single mission - to help the evacuees that had special medical needs.

Staff were deployed to the medial shelters for fourteen days of twelve 12 hour shifts. The Clinical staff consisted of Physicians, Registered Nurses including APNs, Social Workers, LPNs/LVNs, Chaplains, Recreation Therapists, Physical and Occupational Therapists, Pharmacists, Dieticians, Respiratory Therapists, Nursing Assistants and technicians.

While each staff member had a duty and shift assignment, everyone understood the expectation that anyone and everyone should do anything and everything that needed to be done. Staff were truly challenged to move beyond their particular profession and or occupational skills and to seek opportunities to provide solutions to barriers. A few closing thoughts ... VA Nursing stood ready and delivered unique capabilities to the Hurricane Katrina and Rita disaster relief efforts. VA nursing staff from facilities across the nation selflessly volunteered to serve their fellow Americans and quickly integrated into a cohesive team.

- Upon exit these are some of the comments staff made in response to what they believed they accomplished during their deployment: Met a lot of good people from around the world. I learned a lot about what really goes on in a disaster. I was able to help people and appreciate what little I do have.
- Showed evacuee's how people cared.
- Provided a clean & sanitary work environment & living situation for both employees & patients. Along with normal duties and interaction with residents of the shelter, we provided physical & emotional support & listened to their stories intently & let them know that we cared.
- Daily opportunities to minister to hurting people are always fulfilling.
- Helped the most in need. Humbling experience. Completed assignment despite long hours. Shared my skills with others. Part of a new mission.
- Currently enrolled in a master level's health policy class, so this deployment gave me first hand experience of health policy development, implementation, and modification. I was very pleased to see the words "One VA" in action.
- Family support center utilized for the social,

spiritual and recreational needs of all family members. Supervised the van shuttle for Wal-Mart/bank runs. Started up recreational activities and as a liaison for the City Council, volunteers and local Wal-Mart, accepting donations. Also, worked with Samaritan and Salvation Army to set up a clothing room. Worked with a great team of dedicated VA staff.

- I feel the family support was major part of the transition from the previous shelters. We all had the "Super Gumby" attitude.
- I learned how to quickly set-up chapel services and how to work as an integrated response team.
- Giving these people a clean and good living environment.
- I feel I have deeply touched most of the people I encountered here. I have never felt so grateful to be so tired in my life. Thank you for this experience

VA Nursing leaders and staff from Central Texas HCS, VISN 17, willingly provided great support to the FMS mission. VA nursing staff are commended for an outstanding job staffing these new Federal Medical Shelters. In closing, we share with you the following poem and a note from one the Waco shelter evacuees:

Heaven on Earth

There is a place I got to see

It's where the angels fly free

There is no pain, suffering or tears

This is the place that helps limit our fears

We all feel like we have been to hell and back with "Rita". But there were angels here on earth to guide us. Each of us has different problems and in our ways need guidance. These angels have hearts of gold and were there for us in time of need. I want to say "thanks" to the angels who have taken me under their wing. Let me cry, talk or just be alone with my best friend, my dog Herb.

Some of us have more problems than others, but that's alright. We came from many places, all wanting to go home. God took my hand and carried me here where I would be safe and content.

When the time is right we will all go to our places we call home to start over.

I want to thank all the workers who have helped me in every way while I am here.

So many to list and I can't remember the names, but you know who you are. Its drivers who carry us to appointments with care. The desk people, who answer my questions as best they can. The nurses who just make me feel better any way they can. I want to thank everyone whom I can't name their job specifically, but were friendly and kind to me always.

GOD BLESS EACH ONE OF YOU

*Sincerely,
Evacuee of Rita and Herb the Dog*

2005-2006
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Our Mission Statement

"NOVA: Shaping and Influencing Health Care Within
The Department of Veterans Affairs."

Our Vision Statement

VA nurses will provide high quality nursing care. VA nurses will have an optimal work environment. VA nurses will be well informed on relevant issues that impact VA healthcare and nursing practice. VA nurses will have a strong voice in the legislative arena. VA nurses will have a strong presence at the VHA corporate leadership level. VA nurses will be NOVA members.

important INFORMATION

NEWS FROM NOVA, edited by Nancy Clafin. This newsletter is yours, please feel free to quote, photocopy, or share, but always reference NEWS FROM NOVA.

NEWS FROM NOVA is the official publication of the Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs. It is published four times per year. Subscription price is included in annual dues for members. Postmaster: send change of address and correspondence to NOVA, 1726 M Street NW, Suite 1101, Washington, DC 20036.

It is extremely important that you notify the National Office as soon as possible whenever you have a **change of address** or VA facility. Crucial legislative and other correspondence will then reach you in a more timely manner. If you have not received your election ballot, NEWS FROM NOVA, Annual Meeting brochure, or dues notice, please contact National Office so we can correct the problem.

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