

# Professional Nurses District



# 3

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2006

## Our Mission

- ◆ To promote better understanding of professional nursing on the part of the public.
- ◆ Inform nurses of the activities of the professional nursing organization through the official publication of this district and other media.
- ◆ Foster high standards of nursing practice.
- ◆ To promote the professional and educational advancement of nurses.

## President's Message by Linda MacAuslan



Happy New Year to all of my colleagues. I am truly humbled and honored to serve you as president of our Professional Nurses District#3. I am excited

about this opportunity and thrilled to work with our group of energizing, creative and caring Board of Directors. We are facing challenging times as we strive to develop and promote opportunities for professional and educational advancement of nurses. We value your suggestions and involvement.

I would like to thank Margie Hopkins, our past president, for her leadership over the past two years. Margie provided direction and guidance to our organization, which helped us to increase our membership base and remain financially stable. Margie was instrumental in providing valuable educational offerings to us and support to us professionally.

As we start the New Year, I think the question that has been asked of me most frequently in the recent months is "What is the current state for the "Proposal to advance the nursing profession?" According to the "Annual Report of the State Board for Nursing," written by Barbara Zittel in the NYSNA Report (2005, October/November). The New York Organization of Nurse Executives

(NYONE) is developing the statutory language for this motion and is obtaining the Senate and Assembly sponsors who will take the bill to the Assembly and Senate. The bill has four elements:

- "Grandparenting of all currently licensed RN's;"
- "Time to permit all students enrolled in associate or diploma programs at the date of the bill's passage to complete their studies and be grand parented;"
- "Provisions that would place an RN's license 'on hold' if the baccalaureate is not obtained in 10 years. This is similar to the action taken when a licensee fails to meet continuing education requirements in those professions that mandate continuing education as a criterion for continued registration;"
- "Opportunity for an extension beyond 10 years for extenuating circumstances, as determined by the State Education Department."

The next step will be to convince the legislators of the worth of this bill.

Best wishes to everyone as we journey together through 2006.

Zittel, B. (2005, Oct/Nov). Annual report of the state board for nursing. *NYSNA Report*. 36, 12-13.

*Linda MacAuslan*

## *Make us an offer!*

There is a desk computer printer for sale—just make an offer! This Year 2000 compliant Brother machine is a laser printer, copier, scanner, answering, and fax machine in one! For more information, or to make an offer, please contact Linda MacAuslan at 737-4263 or e-mail: [lmacauslan@aomc.org](mailto:lmacauslan@aomc.org)



## *2006*

### *General Meetings*

The General Meeting schedule will be:

**April 2006 — Heath Initiatives**

**May 2006— General Meeting/Awards Dinner**

**Please note that there will be a vote at the General Meeting/Awards Dinner in May regarding the proposed changes to the District 3 By-Laws. A copy of the proposed changes is on the website at [www.district3rn.org](http://www.district3rn.org). Please plan to attend and have your vote count!**

## *Current Board and Staff*

### Officers

**President:** Linda MacAuslan (2005-2007)  
**President Elect:** Susan Gosden (2005-2007)  
**Vice President:** Mary Adamus (2004-2006)  
**Secretary:** Lisa White (2005-2007)  
**Treasurer:** Paula Gilbert (2004-2006)

### Nominating Committee

**Marion Leljedal** (2004-2006)  
**Janet Linderbery** (2005-2007)  
**Linda Pasto** (2004-2006)  
**Joyce Stehle** (2005-2007)  
**Heidi Vail** (2004-2006)

### Newsletter Co-Editor

**Karen Davis/Lisa White**

### Board of Directors

**Janet Morgan** (2003-2006)  
**Jean Swinnerton** (2003-2006)  
**Janet Appier** (2004-2007)  
**Karen Davis** (2004-2007)  
**LouAnn DiPetta** (2005-2008)  
**Rosalyn DuBois** (2004-2007)  
**Theresa Hauptman** (2004-2007)  
**Carol Noyes** (2005-2008)

Professional Nurses District 3 website address:  
**[www.district3rn.org](http://www.district3rn.org)**

## *Current Legislative Activity in Albany from NYSNA*

### **Safe Patient Handling-**

Gov. Pataki recently signed and the Senate and Assembly passed legislation which would create a two year demonstration project to study safe patient handling in health care facilities across the state. Facilities participating in the study would agree “to limit manual lifting to emergency situations, provide mechanical lifting devices, and create the policies and procedures to support their use.”

The goal of the project is to be able to prevent musculoskeletal back injuries, a leading cause of nurses leaving the profession. NYSNA notes that according to the U.S. Department of Labor, nurses are “among those at highest risk of developing musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)...Nearly 40% of RNs suffer occupation-related back pain severe enough to require a leave of absence.” (NYSNA REPORT, October/November 2005). It is hoped that the results of this study will lead to interventions that decrease the frequency of MSDs, decrease lost work time, lessen worker’s compensation claims and lead to more nurses being able to stay in the work force.

### **Title of School Nurse**

Legislation has also been passed effective September, 2005 stating that the title *School Nurse* only be used to refer to Registered Nurses. Many school districts, in an effort to save money, have replaced RNs with LPNs.

*RNs and LPNs have very different scopes of practice that can dramatically influence their ability to function in a school setting as described in Education Law (Article 139 - Nurse Practice Act). RNs may independently assess and triage students’ health needs, interpret clinical information, formulate decisions regarding nursing care, and make referrals. LPNs are required by law to function in a dependent role at the direction of the RN, not as an equal replacement. LPNs can only*

*perform specific tasks such as administering medication and gathering student measurements, signs and symptoms. LPNs that exceed their scope of practice could face professional misconduct charges and schools employing them would be exposed to potential litigation. Since schools are facing an increasing number of students with complex healthcare needs, school nurses need to be expert health professionals and only RNs have the professional education and legal authority to provide the appropriate level of care. (from: www.nysna.org. Retrieved 12/28/05)*

### **Educational Advancement for Registered Professional Nurses (RNs)** (from:

www.nysna.org. Retrieved 12/28/05)

*NYSNA supports legislation, which would require RNs to attain bachelor’s degrees in nursing (BSN) within ten years of their initial licensure as a criterion for re-registration to practice in New York State. This legislation is modeled after the requirement that public*

*- Continued on page 4*

## **Elmira College**

### **Be a Leader in the New Millennium Earn a Bachelor of Science Degree**

- 2 Year Curriculum Just for RN’s
- Individualized Clinical Opportunities
- Flexible Scheduling
- Free Transcript Evaluations
- Scholarships & Financial Aid Available
- Individuals who receive tuition reimbursement from employers may defer payment for coursework in the amount of reimbursement until completion of the coursework

**Nurse Education Program (607) 735-1890**

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school teachers in New York State must earn master's degrees within five years of initial certification. The increasing complexity of technology, medications and treatments, and chronic health conditions (in all age groups) underscores the need for nurses to continue their education.

*BSN programs:*

- Provide additional emphasis on key areas of nursing theory and the use of evidence-based practice;
- Expose students to settings and areas of practice that are not part of associate degree programs; and
- Provide students with leadership skills that improve their ability to supervise and monitor other healthcare providers.

Language in this legislation will exempt nurses who are already registered in New York State as well as nursing students who are enrolled in associate degree or nursing diploma programs at the time of enactment.

**Bills, Sponsors and Status: A8160 (Morelle) - Assembly Higher Education Committee; S5056 (Alesi) - Senate Higher Education Committee**

### Lobby Day – Save the Date

NYSNA has set Tuesday, April 4, 2006 as Lobby Day in Albany. An informational session presented by NYSNA prior to lobbying with local legislators. Go to [www.nysna.org](http://www.nysna.org) and click on government relations for more information. There is no fee for participants.

*Margie Hopkins*



## Congratulations !

At the 2005 NYSNA convention, a nurse from our district was awarded the NYSNA Nursing Student Leadership Award.

Jason Mahler, RN a 2005 graduate of Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3), is working as a staff nurse in the neurology and trauma unit at the Arnot Ogden Medical Center. As a student, Mahler worked in collaboration with faculty advisors, administrators, and students to establish on-campus health services, which will be part of the new building project currently in progress at TC3. A representative of the TC3 Nursing Club, Mahler participated in activity fairs to raise awareness of the college's academic and extra-curricular programs.

"In this and other settings, Jay describes what nurses do in terms that make sense to a lay audience," wrote one professor. "He does this with enthusiasm and intelligence and projects a positive image of the profession."

## Changes in Dues!!



Membership Dues will now be collected on an annual basis in either May or November, depending on which part of the year you joined the organization. This will aid in accurate record keeping. If you have any questions as to when your membership dues are to be renewed, please contact Jean Swinnerton at 546-2502 or via e-mail at [JSwinnerton@htva.net](mailto:JSwinnerton@htva.net). Also, dues for retirees are now \$10!

# *NY Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*



Early in 2005, the NY legislature passed a bill creating a commission to “rightsizing” the number of hospitals and nursing homes in the state. The commission (modeled after the Federal military base closure commission) will identify hospitals and nursing homes around the state that should be closed. Through “rightsizing,” the legislature plans to cut Medicaid spending. Additionally, by creating the commission NY will gain \$1.5 billion from the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) according to the terms of an agreement between DHHS and Governor Pataki.

The commission is required by law to submit a report by December 1, 2006. The report’s recommendations will take effect by December 31, 2006, unless they are rejected in their entirety by either the Governor or the Legislature.

Governor Pataki has described the need for “rightsizing” as follows:

In the acute care sector, hospitals must be divested of excess beds and services that reduce efficiency, increase costs and hamper access to care. ... In the long-term care sector we must balance the need to renovate and replace our aging stock of nursing homes with the trend toward declining bed occupancy brought on by better health among older people and dynamic growth in community- and home-based services. ... The task at hand may be challenging, and the decisions that the commission will make may be difficult, but there is an imperative need to restructure the state's hospital and nursing home systems.

The Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is comprised of 12 statewide

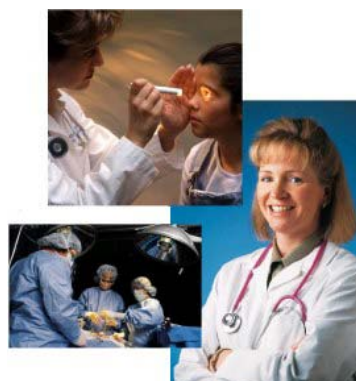
commissioners, 36 regional commissioners and regional advisory councils. By law, some appointments are made by the governor and some by legislators. Names of commissioners can be found at the commission’s website: [nyhealthcarecommission.org](http://nyhealthcarecommission.org). As of mid-December 2005, appointments to advisory council had not been completed.

The state has been divided into six regions. Using data provided by the New York State Department of Health, the needs of each region will be considered separately and a “scenario” for each region will be developed. In other words, hospitals and nursing homes within each region will be considered in relationship to each other. The Central region covers 24 counties, including Chemung, Schuyler, and Tompkins. The Central region stretches over very rural areas as well as cities such as Rochester, Syracuse and Binghamton.

In November 2005 the commission adopted a rating system to assign scores to hospitals and nursing homes. The rating system is based on six major criteria, each with specific sub-criteria. The New York Times (11-20-05) reported: “The six scoring areas will give points to hospitals that serve a mostly poor population, those without readily available alternatives in their areas, those that provide high-quality care, those that are heavily used, those that are strong financially, and those that have a major economic impact on their communities.” A full description of the rating system can be found on the commission’s website: [nyhealthcarecommission.org/materials/](http://nyhealthcarecommission.org/materials/) Click on: “rightsizing analytic framework.”

NYSNA has been actively monitoring the commission’s activities:

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“NYSNA is a co-founder of a coalition of unions, health-care professional organizations, and consumer representatives that is speaking up on behalf of patients and their need to have access to quality care. The coalition ... has met with a number of state legislators to express concern that community input should be taken into consideration during the commission’s deliberations. Coalition members have attended every meeting of the commission. [NYSNA is] concerned that the commission will base its decisions on cold data rather than the very human needs of our communities. The commission [must have] other information, such as testimonies from patients and RNs and qualitative data from the bedside. The community must have a voice in this process and nurses must be heard because they are most familiar with how health care actually is delivered.” (NYSNA Report Oct/Nov 2005)

The commission is scheduled to meet in Rochester on April 5, 2006. Doors will open to the public 30 minutes before the meeting. If you plan to attend, you must contact Denise Trudeau at 518-474-7354 ext. 1 no more than two weeks in advance to register. Other meetings in the Central region will be scheduled as the regional commissioners and the regional advisory council begin their work. Watch for dates of future meetings at the commission’s website: [nyhealthcarecommission.org/meetings/](http://nyhealthcarecommission.org/meetings/)

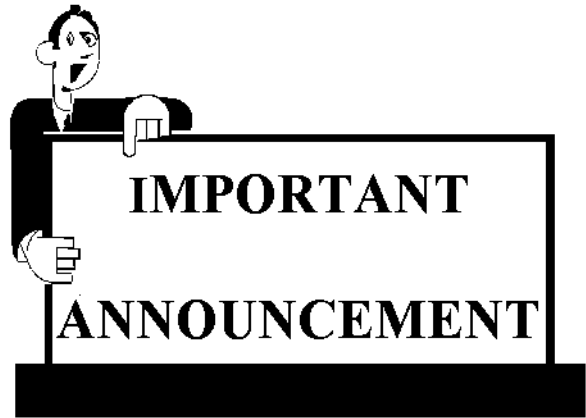
*Submitted by Janet Morgan*



### **Parish Nursing**

The First Presbyterian Church in Ithaca is starting a parish nursing project to promote

health within its congregation and surrounding community. We would like to network with other nurses involved in parish nursing initiatives nearby. If you are part of a parish nursing practice, or know someone in the area who is, please contact Jan Morgan, RN (607-256-1617) ([morganj@tc3.edu](mailto:morganj@tc3.edu)). Thanks!



## *Healthy Heart Initiatives— Care for the Caregivers Networking/ Seminar.*

*Where: Ithaca, N.Y.*

*When: April 2006*

*Look for the flyer with more information and details coming soon in the mail!*





## *Carolyn Britton Nurse Excellence Award*



It is time for the Professional Nurses of District 3 to nominate individuals for the 21st Annual Carolyn Britton Nurse Excellence Award to be presented in May at our Annual Meeting. Award nominees may be any Registered Professional Nurse living in or practicing in our district (which includes Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben and Tompkins Counties) who you feel demonstrates qualities that all nurses should emulate. Candidates for this award are skilled practitioners, as well as advocates for patients, families and the nursing profession. All nominees will be asked to complete an application describing their nursing practice for submission to the selection committee. The District must receive nominations no later than **April 13, 2005**. All nominees will be guests of the District at the Annual Meeting on May 5<sup>th</sup> and will receive a one-year free membership to our organization.

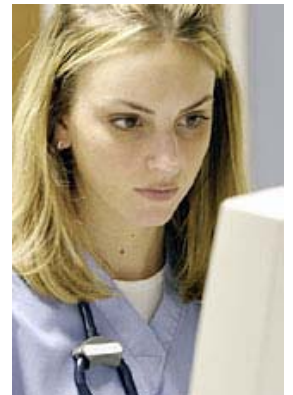
If you know someone who you wish to nominate, please e-mail Lisa White, Selection Committee Chairperson, at [lwhite@aomc.org](mailto:lwhite@aomc.org) with the nominee's name, address, telephone number and place of employment along with a brief explanation of why the nominee should be selected for this award. Please include your name, address and place of employment. All sources will remain confidential.

Please take the time to recognize a deserving nurse whose practice you have come to admire.



## *Professional Nurses District 3 Announces Two Scholarships available!*

The Professional Nurses District 3 announces the establishment of two scholarships to provide financial assistance for current members who are furthering their nursing education! The scholarships will be awarded to a registered nurse pursuing a bachelor's degree in Nursing and a registered nurse pursuing a master's degree in nursing. The awards may be used for educational expenses incurred in obtaining an advanced degree. Each scholarship in the amount of \$300 will be distributed beginning in the fall of 2006. To qualify, applicants must complete the required application form available from the District 3 web site, [www.district3rn.org](http://www.district3rn.org), and submit it to the District 3 selection committee by June 1, 2006.



# Professional Nurses District 3

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## Professional Nurses Gourmet Adventure



As a fund raising effort, District 3 Professional Nurses Association is collecting recipes from members to publish a cookbook. This cookbook will be sold to raise money for future association endeavors.

**But, we need your help for this project to succeed!**

Please e-mail your favorite recipe or recipes to Paula Gilbert at either [gardnspdr@earthlink.net](mailto:gardnspdr@earthlink.net) or [pgilbert@aomc.org](mailto:pgilbert@aomc.org) or Jean Swinnerton at [JSwinnerton@htva.net](mailto:JSwinnerton@htva.net).

Please be sure to include the number of servings that your recipe will make. If you have taken a recipe from a book, or modified a recipe from a book, please credit it as such (i.e. recipe modified from Betty Crocker). If you have any questions, or

would like more information, please contact Paula at 737-2620 (or 737-7162) or Jean at 546-2502.

