



# haapnings

A Parish Nurse Newsletter

## CPE-Second Semester

The second semester for the CPE training sponsored by Hartford Hospital's Pastoral Care Department is scheduled for September 22, 2007 and October 13, 2007.

The presentations for the first session on September 22 will include *Sacred Stories and Panic, Prayer and Presence*. Carolyn Sawyer will do both presentations.

On October 13 Kathleen Davis will speak on *Spiritual Assessments* and we will have a second speaker to be announced later.

Please RSVP to Donna Ruggiero at [mmrugy@snet.net](mailto:mmrugy@snet.net) if you plan to attend. The classes are free to HAAPN members and there is a \$25 fee for non-members. This fee is payable to HAAPN c/o Rita Sheetz, 16 Tanglewood Lane, Bolton, CT 06403.

Certificates of Completion will be handed out to those who have attended all four sessions.

## HAAPN Business

In June an election was held and the following members were elected:

Donna Ruggiero	Coordinator
Rita Sheetz	Treasurer
Ann Marino	Recording Secretary
Lorraine Jacobs	Corresponding Secretary
Lynne Gustafson	Member at Large
Pat August	Member at Large
Marcia Pedersen	Member at Large

These HAAPN members will serve as the Executive Committee for the year 2007-2008. Many thanks to those members who have served in the past for their expertise and wisdom. It was invaluable and we hope to hear from you often.

Some changes have been made to the HAAPN Operating Guidelines, which include elimination of the Advisory Board and changing to a calendar year for membership. As we have become more familiar with our roles we have discovered that it was necessary to streamline our operations, thus the decision to eliminate the Advisory Board. As an alternative we will invite a former Advisory Board member to occasionally join in the Executive Committee meetings.

It was felt that the membership term as it has been, was confusing. Therefore we changed the term to begin in January and end December 31. This fall we will begin sending information regarding membership. Upon payment of annual dues, each member will receive a membership card.

## Programming for the 2007-2008

An idea was raised at the final Executive Committee meeting of last year regarding programming. The three dimensions of Parish Nursing are mind, body and spirit. For the coming year, we will plan programs around these areas of focus. Our first program will feature a presentation regarding the mind. Unfortunately, plans were not complete as of our print deadline. Therefore, we encourage everyone to check the website frequently where this information will be posted. Notification will also be sent individually by CNA.

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## The Lions Low Vision Center, Inc.

**Vision loss affects everyone. Every seven seconds, someone in the United States will become blind or visually impaired. In most cases there is little that can be done to reverse this vision loss. The vision loss can be due to age related macular degeneration, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, cataracts, strokes or trauma.**

The Lions Low Vision Center is available to help those who suffer from vision loss. Most of their clients are sixty or older. They are active adults who are very independent but now must find new ways to do necessary and leisure activities. This is often quite overwhelming for them as well as for their loved ones who want to help.

At the Lions Low Vision Center, the client can learn how to maintain their independence by using necessary aids and devices to make their daily living easier. The Center offers these devices as well as counseling, support and referrals. It can teach those who are employed to use adaptive technology that allows them to keep working. The Center does not take the place of the eye doctor. It offers the rehabilitation portion of eye care.

The Connecticut locations are in New Britain, Torrington, Bloomfield, Danbury, Southbury, Waterbury, Greenwich, Bridgeport, New Haven and Niantic. **For further information, contact** Lions Low Vision Center, 33 Highland Street, New Britain, CT 06050 or call (860) 832-9601.

### Email:

lions\_low\_vision@sbcglobal.net.

### Visit their website at:

www.lionslowvision.org

## Faith Community Nursing

The Hartford Area Association of Parish Nurses (HAAPN) is a membership organization for Faith Community Nurses in the Hartford area and a program of the Connecticut Nurses Association. Faith Community Nursing, more frequently called Parish Nursing, is a specialized nursing practice, recognized by the American Nurses Association that focuses on health maintenance and health promotion in faith communities. A wide variety of ministry opportunities are arising in churches that focus on health, healing and wholeness. Ministries in nursing are considered one of those opportunities. Many terms are used to describe such programs: parish nursing, congregational nursing and healthcare ministry to name a few. HAAPN has member churches from Tolland to Middletown and Southington to East Hampton.

HAAPN's mission is to support Parish Nurses in their ministry of promoting physical, emotional and spiritual health and well being within faith communities. The association seeks to promote the specialty practice of Faith Community Nursing through ongoing education, resource sharing and peer support.

Parish Nurses focus on treating the body, mind and spirit. They consider the spiritual dimension of the individual to be central to well being.

Parish Nursing first began in 1984 when the Reverend Granger Westberg approached Lutheran General Hospital in Chicago about starting a pilot program of parish nursing. In his years as a hospital chaplain he became aware of the emphasis on "sickness" care. He began to create opportunities for the nurses, doctors and chaplains to work in a collegial relationship to address the concept of maintaining good health and wholeness.

Since that time Parish Nursing has grown. Today the growing numbers of elderly, and shrinking healthcare resources are challenging our healthcare system. Parish Nursing has the potential to become an important resource for discharge planners and case managers in both the acute and sub acute component of the healthcare continuum.

Faith Community Nursing in Connecticut has a variety of formats. There are Parish Nurse Coordinators at Bristol Hospital, Saint Vincent's Hospital in Bridgeport, Saint Raphael's Hospital in New Haven and Griffin Hospital in Derby. These are hospital-based programs in the genre of Reverend Westberg. However, there are Parish Nurses throughout the state, with most practicing in church based, volunteer programs.

We encourage any faith community member or leader to consider a nursing ministry in your congregation or parish. Members of HAAPN are available to assist with the formation of such a ministry.

Information about HAAPN can be accessed by visiting the CNA website at [www.ctnurses.org](http://www.ctnurses.org). Scroll down to the HAAPN link and access information on Parish Nursing and upcoming activities in the Hartford area. HAAPN encourages any Registered Nurse who may be interested in Parish Nursing to contact us.

*The above article was written by the HAAPN Executive Committee and distributed to several newspapers.*

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## Program Spotlight

The spotlight today is on the St. Mary's Episcopal Church Parish Nurse Ministry in Manchester.

Greetings and welcome to HAAPN. My name is Lynne Kumnick, I serve as the Director of St. Mary's Episcopal Church Parish Nurse Ministry. I shared the concept of parish nursing with St. Mary's Rector, Father Chip Elliott several years ago; he enthusiastically embraced the idea and helped make the ministry become a reality. The ministry's origins stem from a calling to "be there." "Being there," has a variety of definitions because we are each unique; in turn, each parish nurse ministry will be a unique quilt secured in a common foundation of faith. Our ministry exists to promote physical, emotional and spiritual health of church members through existing ministries while developing new support ministries as indicated. "Being there" requires the nurse to actively listen and dialogue with God seeking discernment regarding needs and concerns of individuals and the parish; this enables the nurse to establish a sense of direction and vision for the ministry. I serve as a volunteer church staff member and attend weekly staff meetings, offering office hours and providing additional times of service as needed. The ministry started with baby steps and continues to unfold as a work in progress promoting **HEALTH**, an acronym symbolic of the heart of the ministry: Health, Education, Advocacy, Leadership, Theology and Holism.

- Health Education needs of the parish are assessed with the assistance of the healthcare advisory team which serves to assist the nurse in addressing the needs of the parish. *Health Beads from the Parish Nurse*, is a monthly educational newsletter featuring health and wellness articles that is supported by related bulletin board presentations. The nurse also serves as a healthcare consulting resource providing health care consultations, blood pressure screenings and offering educational workshops. The nurse visits parishioners who are hospitalized, homebound and recovering or living in extended care upon request.

- Advocacy requires the nurse to offer the parishioners assistance in navigating the health care system through offering supportive listening, providing information and resources. When requested the nurse serves as the parishioner's advocate through communicating with healthcare providers to address health concerns, identify gaps in the healthcare system and initiate healthcare referrals as requested-always being respectful of parishioner confidentiality.

- Leadership requires the nurse to actively promote community awareness of parish nursing by participating in community programs and membership in the Hartford Area Association of Parish Nurses (HAAPN) and National Episcopal Health Ministry (NEHM).

- Theology directs us to pray unceasingly. The nurse offers spiritual support to the parishioners and staff by weaving prayer through practice in a variety of ways via conversation, contemplation, liturgy, meditation, intercessional and healing prayer, Bible study and the reading of spiritually directed literature.

- Holistic care sums up parish nursing practice; the way nursing should be.

Any questions? Please call, I would love to discuss it further. I can be reached at 649-4583 Ext. 22. God Bless!

*Lynne Kumnick, RN, MSN*

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## Faith Community Nursing

As nurses, and Parish nurses in particular, what we frequently do not do is reflect on our practice and be “awed and inspired” by what we do. Rather, we sometimes feel overwhelmed by the demands in our lives: family concerns, work demands, and volunteer commitments, to mention a few. At the May 8 Hartford Area Association of Parish Nurses (HAAPN) Potluck Dinner and meeting during Nurses Week, I was impressed by the stories several nurses told about their work in their parishes and communities. What concerned me after listening to their stories was the apparent lack of self-recognition the nurses had for their accomplishments. Mitiguy,(2007) in an editorial entitled Reverence for Life, talks about nursing practice in connection with celebrating Nurses Week. In it she writes, “The week’s events ...prompt us to step back and reflect on the grand journey we began that first day of nursing school.”

Reading this editorial after attending the HAAPN meeting, I was inspired to write an article for the newsletter. What struck me after listening to the nurses at the meeting was how little credit they gave themselves. So, as I was inspired by Mitiguy’s article, I thought maybe some of Mitiguy’s words would also inspire some of the parish nurses to reflect on and recognize the importance and value of their practice in their faith communities.

In Mitiguy’s words, “Reverence for life is at the center of nursing practice in all its forms. It’s what we try to explain to our close friends and relatives when we talk about our work.” She continues, “Of course, on many days like other nurses, I have felt that my work was routine, repetitious, taxing, or stressful.”

As you may recall, this year’s theme for Nurses Week was about nursing as a profession and a passion. What I sensed from the group at the Potluck Dinner meeting was exhaustion and a lack of awe for their accomplishments. Perhaps we need time to reflect on our accomplishments and celebrate our achievements.

The following excerpt from the editorial: “I think our reverence for the life of the body, soul, mind, and psyche propels us forward to become knowledgeable, competent, and expert professionals, to strive to base our practice on sound evidence. Likewise, a reverence for life and respect for the capacity of people to endure, suffer, heal, and grow sparks our passion for nursing. Some of us might experience this every day, and others just at special moments.”

For Parish nurses, those special moments may be a special encounter with a member of our faith community during a blood pressure screening. What better practice setting to demonstrate “our reverence for the life of the body, soul, mind, and psyche” that propels us forward. Remember who you are and why you do what you do and take time to celebrate (parish) nursing by reflecting on the many lives you have touched. Reflect and be “awed and inspired” by what you do.

*Esther P. Haloburdo, RN, PhD*

*The above are excerpts from an editorial by Judith S. Mitiguy, RN, MS, in the May 7, 2007 issue of Nursing Spectrum, New England Edition.*