

NEWS FROM NOVA

SPRING 2006

Volume 27

Number 2

Time Flies...

By *Dianne Nelson, RN, BSN*



Time flies:

- When you're having fun,
- When you have an energetic and enthusiastic Board of Directors
- When you have the support of many active NOVA chapters,
- When you work with a visionary Executive Director,
- When you have supportive co-workers,
- When you have a soul mate to share the journey,

All of the above!

It truly is amazing to think that my term as your president is rapidly drawing to a close! I have written articles for this newsletter for many years, both in my role as membership secretary and in my role as president. This is by far my most challenging column because I need to speak about how I acted on your behalf, how I lead our organization into the future.

During the 2004 Annual Meeting in Tucson, I spoke with you about the challenges we would face as we worked to make our NOVA vision a reality. I used the analogy of the Mars exploration rovers, Spirit and Opportunity. These sturdy rovers have been collecting data from the surface of Mars for just about as long as I've been president—one Martian year, or two earth years. They glide along the Martian terrain undaunted by time and the challenges of the terrain they are traversing. Let us examine whether NOVA has been as persistent in traversing the terrain of our vision.

VA patients will receive high quality nursing care at all times and in all settings.

Our patients give the VA health care system high marks. In a survey released by the American Customer Satisfaction index this year; veterans reported they are very satisfied with their health care in the Department of Veterans Affairs. The veterans gave VA's inpatient care a rating of 83 on a 100-point scale. That is 10 percentage points higher than the 73 rating given by private sector patients. The VA rating for outpatient care was 80, five

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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.

NOVA Membership Survey Spring 2006

Please complete NOVA's Spring 2006 Membership Survey on the NOVA webpage: <http://www.vanurse.org> by May 8, 2006. NOVA needs to hear from you!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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

NOVA & Freedom Team Salute

By Deborah Beck



I recently learned about the Army's Freedom Team Salute (FTS), a recognition program that strives to strengthen the Army community by honoring veterans for their dedicated service and continued support of today's soldiers. The program also provides soldiers -- Active, Guard, and Reserve -- the opportunity to recognize the

parents, spouses, and employers who support them. This is an excellent opportunity for a partnership to benefit NOVA members as well as our veteran patients.

Working with FTS to help recognize and honor Army veterans for their legacy of freedom, duty and honor to our country can help VA nurses strengthen our bond with the Army and with the veterans we serve.

Through a simple nomination process, veterans and supporters receive a FTS Commendation package which includes a certificate of appreciation and a personalized letter of thanks from the Secretary of the Army and Army Chief of Staff, an Army lapel pin, and an Army decal.

In addition to the Commendation package, veterans can sign up to receive The Salute, published by FTS three times a year, which brings Army veterans news of what's happening in the Army today and how they can stay involved and connected.

Do you know an Army veteran who deserves a Freedom Team Salute? Freedom Team Salute nomination materials will be sent to your chapter presidents before the Annual Meeting. There is also a link to the FTS website in the link portion of the NOVA website. Nominating a veteran for this recognition is a simple way to say "thank you" and another way to remind veterans that their service is appreciated.

Are you interested in becoming an Ambassador for the FTS program in your community? You can help FTS reach out to Army veterans in the facilities where you work by becoming an advocate for the program. You can contact FTS for all the materials you will need to get started.

I would like to encourage you to visit the FTS website for more information about this program, to submit a nomination, and to find out how you can help FTS in their important mission to recognize and honor all Army veterans. www.freedomteamsalute.army.mil.

The Silver Lining: A Nurse's Thoughts on the Volunteer Experience Working with Evacuees from Hurricane Rita in Waco, Texas

By Jennifer Grabot-Gomez, RN, BSN
Nurse Manager, VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System

In September 2005, the VA issued a request for Volunteers to assist with victims of Hurricane Katrina. My husband's family resides in New Orleans so I thought it would be a good idea to offer to help. I put in a request to be available. I thought, at first, I would not qualify to participate because I was a recent VA hire in July 2005.

Much to my surprise, I got a call to ask if I was ready to go to Texas and Volunteer. I was surprised and excited. My boss gave the approval and my husband said; "You go girl." On October 13, I was off to Waco, Texas. My travel was smooth and I arrived in Dallas in the early afternoon and awaited transport to Waco. Waco is about two hours south-east of Dallas. It is the home of Baylor University. It is a big, spread-out, quiet Texas town.

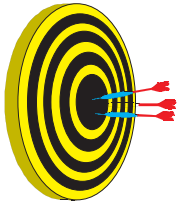
On arrival in Waco, we were taken to the Waco VA to the "Silver Lining Shelter." This shelter is a first, it is a medical shelter, a one of a kind, joint effort of the VA, FEMA and the US Public Health Service. It is a place for those evacuees to go that have medical, physical and/or psychiatric challenges in addition to being displaced from their homes.

The first group of volunteers had chosen the "Silver Lining" as the name for the shelter because every cloud has a silver lining as the old adage goes. The people who came to the shelter had been hit by a "huge cloud" and the shelter was to offer the "Silver Lining," a place of hope and comfort and help to begin anew.

Our building was Building 91. This building was a three-story, formerly locked psychiatric unit. We were given written instructions, a brief welcome and tour, and shuffled off to hotels in the area to be picked up in the morning at 6AM. We were all to be assigned to 12-hour shifts.

I was "chosen" for night shift. Well, I haven't worked nights since I was in my twenties but I was willing. I was assigned to be the Charge Nurse. The unit had 28 patients, a mix of families and children, elderly, slightly demented but sweet ladies, a 6-person group home of schizophrenic men, and a variety of tired, bewildered clients/patients.

All the staff was voluntary including staff from VA's all across the United States, Puerto Rico and Alaska. We had **Isabel Duff** from Long Beach,



On Target: Nursing Research Advisory Group and the Advanced Practice Nurses Advisory Group

By Anna C. Alt-White, RN, PhD

The Office of Nursing Services' (ONS) National Nursing Strategic Plan is operationalized through six goal groups and two advisory groups. This article focuses on the advisory groups: the Nursing Research Advisory Group (NRAG) and the Advanced Practice Nurses Advisory Group (APNAG). Leadership is provided by a chair from the membership. Currently both chairs are in transition. **Maude Rittman** will become the NRAG Chair and **April Gerlock** the APNAG Chair in February. Both groups are actively working on meeting their goals.

NRAG members are nurse researchers in different roles across the VA system, e.g., nurse researcher at a facility, career development scientist, health services researcher. In addition, there is an ex-officio member from the Office of Research and Development. This year NRAG has 5 goals: 1. Increase capacity for nursing research through mentorship; 2. Expand nursing research infrastructure to support nursing research; 3. Enhance evidence-based practice; 4. Promote visibility and value nursing research; 5. Identify and implement VHA nursing research agenda.

Ongoing efforts over the past few years has resulted in increased capacity as evidenced by programs and activities such as career development awards, nurses as members of scientific review panels, pre- and post-doctoral nursing fellowships (awarded by Office of Academic Affiliations), and increased number of proposals submitted for consideration for the Nursing Research Initiative funding. In response to the National Commission on VA Nursing, a VA Nursing Research Agenda has been developed that focuses on identifying, testing, and/or implementing nursing interventions that enhance health and prevent disease in veterans across the care continuum. Another project underway is creating a Directory of VA Nurse Researchers. The directory will assist in networking among nurse scientists and in mentoring the next generation of VA Nurse Researchers.

APNAG members are nurse practitioners (NP) and clinical nurse specialists (CNS) from clinical areas such as women's health, occupational health, long-term care, mental health and primary care. Each APN represents one or two VISNs and one member is a nurse executive. APNAG also has five goals: 1. Provide resources enabling all APNs to develop leadership skills and competence; 2. Improve communication- both flow and timeliness;

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Annual Legislative Roundtable

NOVA held its thirteenth Annual Legislative Roundtable on January 13, 2006 at the DAV National Headquarters in Washington, DC, providing an opportunity for key stakeholders in veterans' issues to gather and share information. NOVA President Elect and Legislative Chair **Cecilia McVey** opened the meeting by acknowledging NOVA's concern about the VA's budget and continued unfunded mandates. She also expressed NOVA's concerns about the centralization of information technology and the implementation of Nurse Executive pay. **Ron Hopper**, NOVA's legislative vice chair, thanked VA officials for their continued implementation of the Commission on VA Nursing recommendations, and expressed concerns about Vet Pro, which may cause delays in hiring and negatively impact VA's ability to bring in staff nurses. **Mary Raymer**, a member of NOVA's legislative committee, expressed appreciation for adequate funding for NNEI and EISP programs, and concern regarding inadequate funding of the Education Debt Reduction Program (EDRP), which has been a critically important recruitment and retention tool.

Major topics and issues presented included:

- o Independent budget prepared by the Veterans Service Organizations
- o Nurses' key roles in proving an early warning system for quality of care at the bedside
- o NOVA members advocating for patient care and for nurses in a public forum to Congress
- o HR1588, a comprehensive bill on PTSD introduced by Lane Evans, which includes care for the impact of PTSD on families
- o Implementation of PL 108-445 which provides alternate schedules of working 36 hours and getting paid for 40 and working 9 months with 3 months off; staffing policies; and tracking nurses who work more than 60 hours in a week or 12 hours in a 24 hour period
- o Implementation of physicians' pay enhancement and nursing executive pay
- o Issues with recruitment and retention of CRNAs

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NOVA Executive Director **Deborah Beck**, NOVA President **Dianne Nelson**, and House Committee on Veterans Affairs Staff Director **Linda Bennett** at the Legislative Roundtable

Augusta Chapter 168
Sharing With Those Who Served
 By Maggie James

For two consecutive years, the Augusta Chapter of NOVA has been in the mood to share. Its members gave up the idea of giving gifts to each other during the holiday seasons. Instead, they came up with innovative ways to share with those that have served our nation. They demonstrated the spirit of unselfishness.

The Augusta Chapter shared personal items with the domiciliary residents during the December holiday in 2004. Again this past December 2005, the nurses felt a strong desire to share with the veterans. They chose the Iraq Unit at the Uptown Division of the Augusta Veterans Affairs Medical Center. The nurses visited with the veterans, led a sing-a-long, served refreshments, played games, and gave gag gifts. The veterans expressed gratitude for the recognition.

The Augusta Chapter, like most other chapters, is faced with a variety of challenges and demands. Members are working extended tours, rotating shifts, and faced with a number of family responsibilities. By getting the members involved in outside sharing activities, they will be more likely to stay with the organization.

The holiday celebration is just one of many things that can be done, such as the nurses' night out, health fairs, seminars, showcase, walks, games, and luncheons. The key word is share. We would like to continue making sharing one of the priorities in our organization.

Eastern Kansas Chapter 202
 By Rose Mary Malm



Tony Wedeking, Chapter President, and Debra O'Quinn, Chapter Board Member with the display asking for donations.

NOVA Chapter 202, Eastern Kansas, held their annual Christmas Open House December 9, 2005 in Hawley Auditorium at

Chapter News



the Topeka campus. Those attending enjoyed performances by the Topeka High School String Quartet and Shawnee Heights String Quartets. There were also several opportunities to do shopping along with many items offered at a silent auction. Proceeds from the silent auction were used to purchase gifts for the Kansas soldiers in Iraq. Approximately \$160.00 was raised. Donations books, puzzles, and comfort items were also accepted. Pictured are **Tony Wedeking**, President, and **Debra O'Quinn**, NOVA board member, with the display at the party asking for items for the soldiers.

Palo Alto Chapter 129
 By Vince Elliott



Outgoing Chapter President David Renfro and National NOVA President Dianne Nelson at the meeting.

Our Chapter held its 11th Annual Chapter Meeting in late January. Sixty nurses attended, including nurses from nearby VA facilities. Our topic was "Cancer: New Developments Improving Patient Care." Two of our speakers and their topics were: **William Novotny, MD**, research scientist at the biotechnology company Genentech, and one of our part time oncology physicians, on the new cancer drug Avastin; and **Sherry Wren, MD**, our Chief of General Surgery, talking about surgical advances in treating colorectal cancer.

This chapter annual meeting also had a vendor fair; opportunities to renew friendships and see colleagues from across our large multi-campus system; opportunities to learn the latest in cancer treatments and care; and opportunities to renew our commitment to NOVA and VA nursing.

Salem Chapter 422
 By Linda-Dell Archuleta

The holidays have passed and hopefully New Year's resolutions have not fallen by the wayside. The most important thing to remember is that health is number one. Many years ago one of my elderly patients told me, "It's a great life if you don't weaken." I thought that was a pretty profound statement. Take time out from the busy week and ill patients to revitalize yourself.

During the month of January, Chapter 422 held our monthly meeting at a Brazilian restaurant. Who says you can't mix business with pleasure!

Our new officers are: President, **Carol Via**; President-elect, **Dottie Rizzo**; Vice President, **Rose Motley**; Secretary, **Fran Hickman**; Treasurer, **Cindy Talton**; Board Members, **Linda Archuleta** and **Patricia McMeekin**. Our chapter is offering a continuing education program at the spring conference. Nationally known speaker **Barbara Bancroft** will present "Cancer Topics." The Nurse Practitioners in Virginia have introduced a bill, SB 456, to allow the prescribing of Schedule II drugs, such as Morphine, Dilaudid, Percocet, etc. An information sheet was handed out to help facilitate when people called or emailed their Senators.

After the meeting, dinner and fellowship completed the evening. The Chinese Auction provided some levity as recipients of gifts either kept the gift or traded it for one they liked better. The "Liar's Dice" game and a crystal desk clock, I believe, received the most action.

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 nancy.clafin@med.va.gov or nclafin@cox.net

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

Deadline Dates
 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!

From the Chairperson, NOVA Foundation

By Jayma Hall, RN, MSN, CNA, BC



Jayma Hall, NOVA
Foundation Chair

The NOVA Foundation begins a New Year with an updated strategic plan to ensure success in advancing our mission to fund VA nurse education and research to improve clinical practice and promote quality health care for veterans and the nation. Two research grants were funded by the Disabled American Veterans Charitable Trust and three scholarships were awarded this year.

When I was appointed as Chair of the Board of Directors my goals were to carry out the vision of Lynna Smith, past President of NOVA, who secured funding to establish the NOVA Foundation as a charitable arm of NOVA, and strengthen the NOVA Foundation to build on past accomplishments. The Board of Directors has been energized with the addition of exceptional members. The newest members are: Cathleen C. Wiblemo, Deputy Director, Health Care Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division at The American Legion; and Terri Gaffney, Vice President for Professional and Editorial Services at *Nursing Spectrum*.

My goals as Chairperson have been met by working with a truly outstanding and dedicated Board of Directors and National Office staff. Lula Cumberlander, Associate Director for Patient and Nursing Services at Bedford VAMC, Bedford, Massachusetts has been recruited to replace me as Chairperson of the NOVA Foundation. Lula Cumberlander and I have worked together in VISN I, and I look forward to working with her again as I complete my term as a Director.

Lula started her VA career at the Washington, DC VAMC in 1978 and has held leadership positions at: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Hampton, Virginia; Prescott, Arizona; and her most recent position since 2000. Lula will be telling you more about herself and the NOVA Foundation in the next NOVA Newsletter.

The revised strategic plan recognizes the need for sound fundraising programs and initiatives to support academic and research goals of VA nurses in order to recognize the significant impact from VA nurses' on the healthcare of veterans and the VA Health Care System.

The NOVA Foundation has two new Brochures, one for corporations and one for the general public, for Board members and staff to disseminate information about the NOVA Foundation and for fundraising activities. The brochures will also be used by a full-service fundraising firm to execute an individual direct mailing campaign. These actions will be a basis to develop a donor database.

Very exciting news is that The NOVA Foundation has been selected as a charity partner by the prestigious Marine Corps Marathon, to be held on October 29, 2006. Recruitment is underway for Fifty-99 runners to "run (or walk) for the NOVA FOUNDATION." Phyllis West, who worked diligently on the proposal, will Chair a sub-committee to develop a variety of ways to raise funds from the Marine Corps Marathon. You will hear much more about this program in the coming months.

The support from NOVA Chapters and VA

nurses is also critical to the NOVA Foundation's ability to accomplish its mission. Donations given by VA nurses are returned to VA nurses when awards are granted for educational scholarships and research grants. In the coming year, the NOVA Foundation will increase our communication with NOVA Chapters with information about chapter donations, individuals honored by their chapters, and scholarship and research grant recipients.

There are also several fundraising events being planned during NOVA's 26th Annual Meeting, April 26-29, 2006 at the Wyndham Miami Beach Resort. Just one event will be a reception/silent auction to be held at poolside. This event will be a way to meet/greet conference attendees, donate to the NOVA Foundation and experience the festive flavor of Miami Beach during one of its most beautiful seasons. I look forward to seeing you all in magnificent Miami Beach

Lastly I want to thank everyone for their support during my tenure as Chairperson, NOVA Foundation. Wonderful initiatives have been realized and many more are underway. We welcome your support, suggestions and assistance in making the goals of the NOVA Foundation happen! Donations can be made by check or credit card. Visit the NOVA web site nova@vanurse.org for more information to support this most worthy cause.

NOVA Foundation Awards Research Grants and Scholarships

RESEARCH GRANTS

- *Readjustment Process of OEF/OIF Veterans & Families Living in Puerto Rico*
Connie Uphold, PhD, RN
North Florida VAMC
\$20,000
- *C.A.L.M.S. (Curb, Alter, Lower Stress for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder): The Power of a Cue Word or Mantra*
Jill Bormann, PhD, RN
San Diego Healthcare System
\$5,000

SCHOLARSHIPS

- JESSE BROWN SCHOLARSHIP - \$3,000**
- **Jenean L. Barney**
Sheridan VAMC
- DIANNE NELSON SCHOLARSHIP - \$1,500**
- **David R. Renfro**
Palo Alto VAMC
- GLHN ARCHITESTS & ENGINEERS
SCHOLARSHIP - \$1,500**
- **Nicolette Estrada**
Carl T. Hayden VAMC

NOVA Congratulates VA Nurses

News from NOVA seeks to recognize VA nurses for achievements. If you know a VA nurse who has received an award or other type of recognition for an achievement, please send the information to Nancy Claflin at nclaflin@cox.net.

NOVA Foundation Donations Donations Received between 11/23/05 and 02/07/06

\$100 - \$249 CONTRIBUTION UP TO \$49 CONTRIBUTION

Vincent Elliott

Lucy V. Holt

Jean S. Hopkins

Billie Jean Lane

Bridget Maybury

Patricia Quigley

Jacquelyn Toliver

\$50 - \$74 CONTRIBUTION

Betty S. Baldwin

Joan Clifford

Lynda Olender-Russo

NOVA Foundation Heroes IN HONOR OF

Vernice Ferguson, MA, RN, FAAN, FRCN from NOVA Board of Directors

The NOVA Board of Directors donates \$500.00 to the NOVA Foundation in honor of **Vernice Ferguson, MA, RN, FAAN, FRCN**, on the occasion of her receipt of the International Distinguished Leadership Award from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools. Since the 1970's, Vernice has been involved in international healthcare policy and nursing leadership. As Chief Nurse in the NIH Clinical Center, she started a foreign nurse exchange program. She served as president of the International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care and spent 9 weeks in South Africa lecturing and visiting hospitals and clinics, carrying the message of the nurse's role in healthcare policy and cancer care. For more than 20 years, she served as a top nurse executive in federal service and was the Chief Nurse at two VA Medical Centers in Madison and Chicago. For 12 years, she was the nurse leader for the Department of Veterans Affairs, the largest organized nursing service in the world with more than 60,000 nursing personnel. She is the recipient of eight honorary doctorates and two fellowships, one in physics at the University of Maryland and the other in alcohol studies at Yale University. She is a Fellow in the Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom, the second American nurse to be honored. She has also received countless awards for leadership. **Vernice's** greatest sense of satisfaction comes from helping nurses who give direct patient care. "When you work with patients every day, the gratification is real." She has made a difference to many nurses, and consequently, many patients throughout the world.

IN HONOR OF

Nancy Claflin, RN PhD CPHQ FNAHQ from The Carl T. Hayden Chapter of NOVA

The Carl T. Hayden Chapter of NOVA donates \$250.00 to the NOVA Foundation in honor of **Nancy Claflin, RN, PhD, CPHQ, FNAHQ**. Nancy graduated from Arizona State University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1974 and began her nursing career at the Carl T. Hayden VA Medical Center. She worked as a staff nurse in neurology, medical, surgical, and intensive care units. She also worked as a nurse manager, educator, and nursing quality improvement coordinator. She is currently the Chair of the Education Department. She has revitalized the local chapter, which had been active in the early 1980's but had not been recently organized. She joined the NOVA Board of Directors in 2002 and served as a Director and Secretary.

She serves as Chair of the History Committee and continued documentation of NOVA's history from 1991 through 2005. She is currently the Editor of *News from NOVA*. She is currently serving as Membership Secretary and Chair of the Membership Committee. She devised a plan for dividing chapters into regions and assigning Membership Committee members to regions to provide a contact for membership issues. This process has more than tripled the number of contacts for NOVA chapters. She is committed to increasing NOVA's membership to help NOVA continue to make a difference for VA nurses.

IN HONOR OF

LYNNA C. SMITH, RN

A Committed NOVA Member: Giving to VA Nurses and Veterans for a Quarter of a Century

Deborah Beck, NOVA's Executive Director, and her husband, Bill Bergman, made a \$250 contribution to the NOVA Foundation in honor of Lynna Smith's retirement, her 30-year career with the VA, her commitment to NOVA, and her unrelenting efforts to make the NOVA Foundation a reality. Lynna joined the VA in 1975 while enrolled in a nurse practitioner program and worked in the emergency walk-in clinic. After completing the program and receiving her certificate, she transferred to the mineral metabolism clinic where she worked for the next 29 years. Lynna joined NOVA upon its formation and has been a member ever since. Her American Lake Chapter was very active in the early years of NOVA, and she joined the NOVA National Board in 1983 as a Director. In 1985, she became the Treasurer, a position in which she served for four years. At the conclusion of her term, she took a year off the Board because she was overwhelmed with her responsibilities as a single working mother enrolled in a master's program. Lynna rejoined the Board in 1990 where she remained until her term as President ended in April 1996. While President, Lynna testified three times before the House Veterans Affairs Committee and submitted written testimony once. Her commitment to NOVA didn't end with the conclusion of her term. She was determined to get the NOVA Foundation off the ground and tirelessly contacted potential underwriters to obtain funds for the first NOVA Foundation Board meeting. Her efforts paid off when Johnson & Johnson agreed to provide the NOVA Foundation \$7,500 in seed monies. The first Board meeting was in October 1998, and she served as Vice Chair for two years. Few people have the passion and dedication that Lynna possesses. This donation is a small remembrance of her many years of service to her nursing colleagues and our Nation's veterans.



NOVA Board of Directors, Seated: **Mary Raymer**, Vice President; **Cecilia McVey**, President Elect; **Dianne Nelson**, President; and **Deborah Beck**, Executive Director; Standing: **Susan Dove**, Director of Administration; **Cheryl Knowles**, Director; **Maggie James**, Director; **Ron Hopper**, Treasurer; **Joan Clifford**, Director; **Larry Lemos**, Secretary; and **Nancy Claflin**, Membership Secretary.

ANNOUNCING: NOVA AWARD WINNERS FOR 2006

NOVA announces the award winners for 2006. Congratulations to these outstanding professionals.

The **Professional Nurse Award for Clinical Excellence** is awarded to **Terry Tucker, RN, MS, CCRN, CEN**, Critical Care Coordinator at the VA Maryland Healthcare System (VAMHCS). He is the founder and coordinator of the Chesapeake Critical Care Consortium, Baltimore, MD, a compendium of 19 hospitals, and serves as a senior instructor teaching advanced resuscitation topics and emergency cardiac patient management. Mr. Tucker has a lifelong history of learning, and has served as a positive and experienced role model to the nursing staff at VAMHCS, as well as to nurses throughout the Baltimore Metropolitan area.

The **Distinguished Service Award** is being given **Nancy Valentine, RN, PhD, D.Sc (Hon.), MPH, FAAN**. **Dr. Valentine** has made numerous contributions to VA nursing, NOVA, and the NOVA Foundation. Secretary **Jesse Brown** appointed **Dr. Valentine** as the Assistant Chief Medical Director for Nursing Programs/Chief Nursing Consultant in 1993. She served in this capacity until 1998. Some of her achievements include establishing a leadership paradigm for senior nurse leaders to pursue Magnet Status, championing the launch of the electronic medical record, and institution of the first national virtual learning opportunity for graduate nurse practitioners. She fulfills the criteria of improving the quality of national and VA healthcare and the enhancement of the nursing profession.

The **Vernice Ferguson Award** is being given to **Jayma Hall, RN, MSN, CNA, BC**. She has had a 35-year career in the VA, retiring in 2004 from the Northampton VA Medical Center as Associate Director of Patient Care Services and the Acting Service Line Director for Sensory and Rehabilitative Services for the New England Healthcare System. In July 2004, she accepted the position of Chair, Board of Directors, of the NOVA Foundation. Under her leadership, the NOVA Board of Directors worked to build on successes of the past and developed a strategic plan with actions to increase support for nursing scholarships and research grants. Under her leadership, the NOVA Foundation is committed to ensure that current and future veterans receive outstanding health care.

The **Silver Star Chapter Award** will be awarded to the Boston Chapter. The Boston Chapter has been active since the early days of NOVA. Despite undergoing many changes, not the least of which has been a major upheaval in the integration of 3 sites under one healthcare system, the presence of a NOVA chapter has always remained. In the past two years, they have held two daylong programs, as well as a number of Meet and Greet programs to educate nurses about NOVA. In addition to monthly meetings, they produce a monthly newsletter to go to all units which discusses chapter updates, meeting dates, and reminders of the next NOVA annual meeting. Chapter members are

instrumental in shaping Nurses Week activities. Current membership is at an all time high.

Congratulations to all the award winners! Join us at the NOVA Annual Meeting to recognize them for their contributions.

Welcome Aboard New Members 1/29/06 - 02/07/06

Ann Arbor, MI
Carey Michel

Atlanta, GA
Bobbie Johnson
Melodie Stemberge

Baltimore, MD
Donetta Hatcher

Boston, MA
Maria Cerro
Debra Hautala
Katherine Van

Bronx, NY
Bridget Maybury

Charleston, SC
Tina Fereday
Marrinique Ferguson

Dayton, OH
Robyn LaPointe-Horton

Denver, CO
Claire Robert
Nancy Robert

East Orange, NJ
Marsha Smith

Fargo, ND
Vicki Livesay

Fort Harrison, MT
Katherine Sluder

Fresno, CA
Anthony Naranjo

Gainesville, FL
Doris Sadownik

Hines, IL
Cecilia Beuprie
Ruth Jennetten

Long Beach, CA
Idalia Cabrera

Manchester, NH
Carol Williams

Miami, FL
Ana Javellana
Sonya Longley
Walter Makowski
Piedad Zamora

Manhattan, NY
Nancy Ruiz

Northampton, MA
Cynthia Wilson

Phoenix, AZ
Billie Lane
Sharon Overton
LuAnn Wyllie

Providence, RI
Marilyn Horan
Eric Paquet

St. Louis, MO
Ramona Wallace

Tampa, FL
Margaret Mikelonis

Tucson, AZ
Martha Ayres
Jenny Sanchez
Rebecca Tiffault

Tuskegee, AL
Mary Ann Austin

Topeka, KS
Suzanne Forman



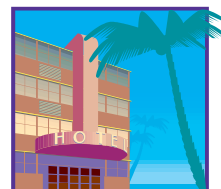
NOVA Treasurer **Ron Hopper**, NOVA President Elect **Cecilia McVey**, and American Legion Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs **Cathy Wiblemo** at the Legislative Roundtable.

Mark Your Calendars Now!

NOVA Annual Meeting 2006

Miami, Florida

April 26—29, 2006



Join your VA colleagues in Miami

Outstanding Speakers

Exhibitors • Networking

Annual Meeting • CEUs

Watch for more details in the near future!

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 increasing membership this year. NOVA is our voice in Washington, and NOVA's voice is clearly heard! The Member-Get-A-Member Campaign is ongoing and ends 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!** Sign up 25 new members, and you'll get a **FREE Conference Registration and three nights' hotel FREE at the conference!** You must send all the applications in the same envelope together. For dues by payroll deduction, a copy must be taken to the local payroll office, and you will get credit for the membership when dues are deducted. 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 for those chapters who have had the greatest increase in membership numbers.

The chapter size for the membership awards will be as follows: Small--up to 25; Medium--26-99; Large--100 or greater. This will end April 1, 2006.

All awards will be publicized in the newsletter and on the website.

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.

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 employ at VA, and their most memorable experience as a VA nurse.

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**, 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.



Sponsored by the Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs Foundation

NOVA Bumper Stickers

The NOVA Foundation has developed an exciting new program to honor VA nurses and the veterans they care for (see bumper sticker at left). This exciting bumper sticker program is also a fundraiser for the NOVA Foundation in order to support the 2006 scholarships and research grants. Additionally, it is also a chapter fundraiser.

Join the NOVA Foundation in this exciting program and earn funds for your chapter! To discuss details, call Joy Ross (National Office) at 202-296-0888 or Mary Seaman (NOVA Foundation Board and Tampa VAMC) at 813-991-7835 (home) or 707-799-5163 (cell).

Board Briefs

The NOVA Board of Directors met in Washington D.C. on January 12 and 13, 2006. The following actions were taken:

- Approved a motion for a two year financial review (fiscal years 2005 and 2006).
- Hosted the 13th annual Legislative Roundtable for Veteran Service Organizations, House and Senate VA Committee staff members, nursing organizations and VA Central Office staff on January 13th.
- Selected Boston as the site of the 2008 Annual Meeting and Palo Alto/San Francisco Bay Area as the site of the 2010 Annual Meeting.
- Appointed Larry Lemos as the APN liaison to the NOVA Board.
- Approved a line of credit to the NOVA Foundation to underwrite the direct mail campaign as well as Marine Corps Marathon entry fee.
- Approved donation to the NOVA Foundation in honor of Vernice Ferguson's recent International Distinguished Leadership Award from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools.
- Accepted marketing strategy for dental insurance plan.

Payroll Deduction for NOVA Dues

By Nancy Claflin

One of the wonderful benefits of NOVA is that you can pay your national dues by payroll deduction. All you need to do is to complete a membership application (available on the web page), take it to payroll for them to get started, and mail a copy to the national office. If you are a supervisor, however, be aware that your payroll deduction may be cancelled without your knowledge. Recently, I received a message from a human resources representative with the following error message they received that was automatically generated from the PAID system. The message indicated "supervisory position review entitlement for withholding union dues." Human resources concluded that I was currently paying union dues, and asked me to let them know if this was an error, since supervisors cannot pay union dues. The problem occurs because there is only one place on the earnings and leave slip for both union and professional dues. All chapters should check with any members who are supervisors and using payroll deduction to make sure that the NOVA payroll deductions are still occurring. This is the link to the bulletin that spells it out. Office of Financial Policy issued OF Bulletin 02GA2.01 dated Oct 30, 2001. <http://www.va.gov/publ/direc/finance/02GA2_01b ul.htm>

Announcing NOVA's New Webpage Program!

Generally a professionally designed website can be quite an expensive proposition! Therefore, the NOVA Board has reviewed an exciting new program to allow individual Local NOVA Chapters to have a presence on the Web – at a very minimal cost. Geo-Net Marketing & Design, who designed and maintains the NOVA National Website – www.vanurse.org – has put together a plan that makes having your own webpage affordable for every local chapter.

Geo-Net Marketing will update your webpage once per year (update Board of Directors, replace photo and change any or all text) for a fee of only \$75.00. Twice per year updates would include same as above, with one additional update to photo and text, for a fee of \$125.00. Chapters wishing to update their webpage more often could do so "on request", at a cost of \$50/hour. All fees will be billed to the local chapter by, and payable to, Geo-Net Marketing.

For more information – or to get started right away! – contact: Gina Owsley at Geo-Net Marketing & Design. Phone: 864-476-0387, or email: gina@geonetmarketing.com.

Now every Local Chapter can have their own Webpage!

Your individual webpage will include:

- ✓ Your own sub-domain name, example: www.vanurse.org/yourchaptername/
- ✓ Chapter #, name & location (address, phone #, etc.)
- ✓ Local Board of Directors, with photos and email addresses
- ✓ Space for a large "Chapter Photo"
- ✓ Area for "Chapter News", or any information or text desired

Your webpage will be built on the existing NOVA National site, thereby eliminating any cost for hosting – and, will include a link from the NOVA website.

Your initial setup fee: \$200.00

Your only additional costs would be for updates to your Webpage. (See below.)



Featuring Membership Committee Member Lee Fealy

In May 2004, when **Jeanette Siler**, President of the Miami Chapter of NOVA, asked me to run for President in 2005, my immediate response was, "I'll be your vice-president and then run for president in 2006." We didn't know at that time how ill Jeanette was. It became necessary for me to step in as acting president in September 2004, prior to my election as president in January 2005. With help from **Providencia Cardona** and **Brenda Rodriguez**, I was quickly brought up to speed. My primary goal was, and is, to build an active membership. In order to do this some activities were instituted.

Our meetings are now timed (3rd Wednesday of the Month) to coincide with the week of new R.N. orientation, and the meeting is a part of their orientation to the hospital. This is possible because of a very supportive Chief Nurse and nursing education department in Miami.

To entice nurses to attend meetings, we offer food and fun, two of the major needs of a nurse's day. Our meetings are held at lunchtime, and dessert is provided. All who attend receive a token of appreciation, such as a small hand cream or bubble bath. To keep the 'off shift' members informed, the minutes of the meeting are published in our Microsoft Outlook and sent to all R.N.'s the next day. I personally 'make rounds' on all shifts and on all floors at least once a month to give the staff a chance to express concerns or ask questions, to recruit those nurses that I might have missed and to communicate an interested NOVA presence. I am able to do this because of my unique position with the Miami VAH. I am a Specialty Float Nurse. I relieve the Case Managers, Surgical Coordinators, Transplant and Hepatology nurses when they are on vacation, etc. This position gives me an opportunity to keep my skills up to date, to work in many different areas of the hospital (with new staff members) and to be constantly stimulated in nursing. Each day offers new opportunities. This year the convention is being held in Miami, and this has proved to be a useful recruiting tool.

It has been my experience that a question frequently asked when recruiting is, "What can NOVA do for me?" For an answer to this, look to the NOVA web site. Information posted on the web site gives me a new insight to help answer that question. But a constant response that I make is, "NOVA is our educated and informed voice in the legislative process. Prior to 1980 we were silent. Since then we have been heard as strong advocates for our patients and our profession. As a professional how could you not be involved?"

NOVA Congratulates

Congratulations to:

Jenice Guzman, Geriatric Nurse Practitioner, West Los Angeles Health Care System, on the occasion of her winning the VHA Mark Wolcott Award for Clinical Excellence.

Sarah Myers, Associate Nurse Executive, Nursing Home Care Unit, Atlanta VAMC, on the occasion of her selection to the Leadership VA program.

Lynda Olender, Nurse Executive at the James J. Peters Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Bronx, NY on the occasion of her induction into the New York State Nurses' Association Leadership Institute at their annual convention.

NOVA is proud of your contribution to VA nursing.

Chapter Contributions to NOVA Foundation

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 Luncheon in April 2006.

NOVA 2006 Annual Business Meeting



Join us in Miami for our newly-formatted
Annual Business Meeting!
The Board reports will be in a narrative
format, enhanced by a
Power Point presentation.
Friday, April 28, 2006 during lunch—
see you there!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *cont. from page 1*

percentage points higher than the rating for the private sector and 9 percentage points higher than the satisfaction rating for all federal services. We truly do provide world-class health care for our veterans. These latest findings mark the sixth consecutive year the VA health care system has outranked the private sector for patient satisfaction.

VA nurses will have an optimal work environment to care for patients.

In the recent NOVA membership survey, members indicated some frustration with computerized charting and the number of computers available to the staff for charting. On the other hand, the respondents rated state-of-the-art informatics as one of the most rewarding aspects of working for the VA. Concern with patient acuity, staffing levels, mandatory overtime and performing non-nursing duties were cited in the work environment arena. The Office of Nursing Services outlined strategic goals to address workplace and informatics concerns. The National Commission on VA Nursing also included recommendations centered on these issues.

VA nurses will be well informed on relevant issues that impact their nursing practice.

Hot News is available through email and on the NOVA web page and our subscriber list is growing every day. My compliments go to **Vincent Elliott** and **Deborah Beck** for keeping these news alerts interesting and timely. The NOVA web page underwent a complete renovation and we hope you find it more user-friendly. News From NOVA is packed with quarterly information, thanks to **Nancy Clafin**. **Nancy** truly loves her job as Editor and it shows in the quality of our newsletter.

VA nurses will have a strong voice in the legislative arena.

During the 2005 Annual Meeting, NOVA held a Legislative Briefing on Capitol Hill. **Senator Akaka** addressed the attendees with these words, "NOVA is a tremendous organization—not just for what the organization does—but because of who you are: nurses caring for veterans." NOVA continues to be a strong voice on Capitol Hill, telling our stories and shaping and influencing health care in the VA.

The NOVA Executive Board meets frequently with the House and Senate VA Committees to discuss pending legislation and tell our stories from the field. During the 2005 annual meeting, large busses carried attendees to the Hill "en masse" to attend an open legislative briefing and then meet individually with their congressional members. Our Executive Director monitors legislation that would impact VA nursing and patient care; she frequently receives questions as to where NOVA stands on an issue. Every year NOVA writes a chapter for the Independent Budget formulated by the Veterans Service Organizations.

VA nurses will have a strong presence at VHA corporate leadership level.

Every month the president, president-elect and executive director have a monthly conference call with **Cathy Rick**, Chief Nursing Officer, and her staff. During this call, we share information about what is happening in the legislature, in headquarters and in the field. The Office of Nursing Programs has set many strategic goals and they are meeting these goals to improve nursing practice and patient outcomes, always incorporating the recommendations of the National Commission on VA Nursing.

During my term, there were significant changes in VA leadership. **R. James Nicholson** was confirmed as the Secretary of the VA and **Dr. Jonathan Perlin** was confirmed as the Under Secretary for Health. Dr. Perlin has always been supportive of NOVA and he meets with the Board of Directors whenever his schedule allows. NOVA has not yet had an opportunity to meet with the new Secretary. **Gordon Mansfield**, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, is also very supportive and spoke during our 2005 annual meeting.

VA nurses will seek membership in NOVA.

For several years our membership hovered around 2600. Thanks to the energetic efforts of the Membership Committee, led by **Nancy Clafin**, this number is now over 2800. By the Annual Meeting in Miami we will reach the 3000 mark! It is the job of every member to recruit!

The NOVA Foundation comes under the umbrella of our vision for the future. **Jayma Hall**, the Chair of the Foundation, has recruited a vibrant, hard-working Board of Directors. Jayma's leadership will enable the Foundation to continue even when she decides to step down as Chair. You will read about the myriad fundraising activities and publicity ideas elsewhere in this newsletter. The goal is to fund as many scholarships and research grants as possible. I am pleased to announce I am funding an on-going scholarship in my name.

Vision without action is just a dream. Action without vision just passes time. Vision with action can change the world. This action comes from the NOVA Board of Directors, from Deborah and her staff in our National Office, and from every NOVA member. I thank all of you!

The stamina of the intrepid Mars rovers Spirit and Enterprise throughout this Martian year has been incredible. The work they are doing has far exceeded the vision of NASA. In the same way, the work of NOVA has far exceeded the original vision of our founders twenty-five years ago. Our mission of shaping and influencing healthcare in the Department of Veterans Affairs is our blueprint; our vision motivates and propels us to action. Thank you for letting me lead NOVA into a future as bright as our past.

SILVER LINING cont. from page 3

Chuck Dorman, Ed B. Coleman and Mike Lambert from Los Angeles; **Jan**, a wonderful Social Worker from Togus, Maine, **Tyronica**, a lovely young lady from Memphis, Tennessee and two wonderful chaplains- **Ted** and **BJ**, and so many more. All were there to give what we could in time and skills and kindness. An amazing group of men and women! Although all the volunteers were incredible, the group that impressed me most was the Social worker group. They came and resourced, placed and accessed services with finesse. Especially impressive to me was their ability to develop so many referral sources so quickly in communities that they didn't know. Everyone did their best with the residents. No one was above doing whatever was needed.

There were volleyball games for patients and staff, Monday night football with pizza, and many efforts to treat both body and mind, an attempt of restoration of some level of normalcy to people who had just lost everything but their lives and each other. Every effort was made to return people home whenever safe and as soon as possible. Most of our residents were from Beaumont or Port Arthur, Texas. So many ordinary yet amazingly resilient people. Some of the people who touched me most were: the man with newly diagnosed esophageal cancer chased away by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita then at least five other Shelters before he found help in the "Silver Lining Shelter;" the elderly mom with an 18 year old adopted severely autistic son, what a challenge! what love!; the men from the group home who learned in a short time to trust us a little with shy smiles and brief conversations; and a little 7 year old fireball we called Dr. A; he hugged his way into my heart. These and so many more!

Were there challenges and problems? Sure! Fatigue, strange rooms, odd shifts. I was more tired than I had ever been! All in all, I wouldn't have changed a thing. The experience allowed us to use all our skills; to reach out to others at a time when they needed it most. Though the evacuees and staff were together only a short time, in small ways we touched each other; small kindnesses, routine and symptom control medications, haircuts, three a.m. bowls of cereal, resources and referrals; hugs as we left. It was a truly memorable opportunity. I recommend volunteering to anyone who is willing to seize the moment to reach out, give a little extra and try to make a difference in the life of even one other human being. In very small ways, we really can make a difference to each other.

ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE cont. from page 4

- o Requesting increased funds for VA research, including nursing research
 - o Support for mandatory funding for VA healthcare
 - o Implementation of laws without additional resources
 - o Lack of VA strategic plan for long term care and issues of aging veterans
 - o VA's polytrauma centers caring for Iraqi war veterans
 - o Response to the National Commission on VA Nursing Recommendations including:
 - o Implementation of the VA Nursing Outcomes Database (VANOD) in all facilities with more automatic data collection, including using clinical reminders technology
 - o Clinical Nurse Leader pilot program with more than 50 sites
 - o Revision of the nurse qualifications standards to fit different career paths, administrative, clinical, and consultative
 - o Survey of nurses regarding performing non-nursing tasks
 - o Implementation of CREW (civility, respect, and engagement in the workplace) for working on nurse-physician collaboration issues
 - o Nursing innovations awards
 - o Support for facilities seeking Magnet status including monthly phone calls
 - o Research for attracting new hires in the VA
- Participants included: NOVA Board of Directors President **Dianne Nelson**, Vice President Elect **Cecilia McVey**, Vice President **Mary Raymer**, Treasurer **Ron Hopper**, Membership Secretary **Nancy Claffin**, Secretary **Larry Lemos**, Directors **Joan Clifford**, **Magalene James**, and **Cheryl Knowles**; NOVA Executive Director **Deborah Beck**; Director of Administration **Susan Dive**; NOVA Foundation Vice Chair **Margaret Kruckemeyer**; Department of Veterans Affairs Chief Nursing Officer **Cathy Rick, RN, CHE, CNAA**; Association of VA Nurse Anesthetists President **Maureen Reilly CRNA, PhD**, President Elect **Angela Mund, CRNA**, Director At Large **Carol Craig CRNA**, and Executive Director **Laura Cohen, CRNA**; National Association of VA physicians & Dentists **Bill Booher**; Friends of Medical Care and Health Research Executive Committee Member **Barbara West**; Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs Professional Staff/Majority Staff **Sara Hofsletter**; House Committee on Veterans Affairs Staff Director for the Subcommittee on Health **Linda Bennett**; American Legion Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs **Cathleen Wiblemo**; Disabled American Veterans Associate Director for Legislative Affairs **Adrian Atizado**; and Amvets Deputy National Director **David Greineder**.

ON TARGET: NURSING RESEARCH *cont. from page 4*

3. Identify issues impacting APN practice; 4. Increase knowledge of current practice and provide opportunities for networking; and 5. Enhance evidence-based practice.

Plans are well under way for the First VA APN Conference in San Antonio, TX October 26-29 in conjunction with the Texas Nurse Practitioner Conference. Watch for announcements! Also, a credentialing and privileging algorithm is near completion. Many initiatives are under way to increase communication. For example, the current website is being redesigned and will be part of ONS' Community of Practice on the COLLAGE website. In addition, the newsletter, VA APN NEWS, was published in the Fall. Another initiative is strengthening and improving communication among APNs and the Nurse Executives at their facilities.

As you probably noticed, each Advisory Group has an evidence-based practice goal. Representatives from these two groups are collaborating with the NNEC Evidence-Based Practice Goal Group to create and implement a culture that routinely uses the best available evidence all aspects of care.

In summary, it is an honor to be the ONS facilitator to both of these groups. They continually strive to ensure optimal nursing care to the veterans we serve.

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Rebecca Waldon, RN, MSN, FNP, GNP
Brian Westfield, RN, MS, NP-C Nurse Executive

HOT NEWS

Have you seen NOVA's new improved web page? Visit the site and be sure to sign up for NOVA's Hot News and encourage all NOVA members at your facility to do the same. Log onto <http://www.vanurse.org> to sign up. Hot News is NOVA's e-mail news service highlighting the latest in health care and health care policies. NOVA uses hot news to keep NOVA nurses updated on important legislative and other nursing issues. Sign up today!

Have you signed up for Hot News but don't seem to be getting your messages? We have some email addresses in the database that aren't correct, as we can't send messages. Be sure that you enter a valid, correct email when signing up for Hot News on the NOVA web site. If you have previously signed up for Hot News but aren't receiving any messages, please contact Joy Ross at the NOVA office at jross@vanurse.org or call her at 202 296-0888.

Visit the NOVA Web Page <http://www.vanurse.org>

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Contact us at nova@vanurse.org

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.

REMINDER:

Put your questions or requests in writing when communicating with NOVA National Office.

Use our website for faster service:

www.vanurse.org

or fax your comments to:

202-833-1577

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