

REGION ONE NURSE

SPRING/SUMMER 2015

THE VOICE OF NURSES IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

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Letter from the Chair

Patty Healey

Dear Registered Nurses of Western Massachusetts,

The Massachusetts Nurses Association has continued to fight for safe staffing legislation throughout the last year while working hard to uphold the ICU staffing law passed last October. Hearings have been conducted with the Public Health Commission and many RNs have testified before the Commission. Special thanks to Berkshire Medical Center nurse, Harley Keisch, RN, for traveling to Boston to testify on our behalf. The fight is hardly over, as the Union has worked to educate its members on how to maintain appropriate ICU staffing. Hospitals have steadfastly fought against the implementation on the units and at the commission hearings. It is imperative that all RNS in Massachusetts hospitals work to maintain safe staffing levels in all units, for all patients. When ICU RNs can uphold their ethical and professional responsibility to provide the care that patients deserve, then our vision to improve hospital care on ALL units, for ALL patients will be realized.

Peer reviewed published research continues to support the efforts of the MNA/NNU to establish measurable staffing levels that produce better outcomes for our patients. Nurses can stay updated by following the Massachusetts Nurses Association website: www.Massnurses.org and the National Nurses United website: www.nationalnursesunited.org. Both organizations have Facebook pages to keep you informed as well.

You can also be updated by MNA email: each member has been assigned her/his own MNA email account and it can be activated by calling the Membership office of the MNA 1-800-882-2056.

The next MNA Annual Convention will be held on October 8- details to follow.

Western Massachusetts MNA Regional Council One maintains an office in Northampton where the council meets monthly to plan activities, share information about current bargaining unit issues, and ensuring there are Union resources in Western Mass. Every bargaining unit member is welcome to visit, attend a meeting and participate in building a stronger organization for nurses and patients. The MNA website has a link to the Regional Council One as well.

See details on page 5 on our summer river cruise in August, a fun event for all members and a guest. Cruising the Connecticut River at sunset with friends will be an energizing joyful experience for all. Hope to see you on the boat!

Remembering Shirley Mackey

April 25, 1923 - December 31, 2014

Shirley Mackey was an active and supportive member of the MNA from 1967-1980s. She was employed for 40 years at Cooley Dickinson Hospital as a registered nurse. Winner of the Economic and General Welfare Citation of Achievement for outstanding accomplishments through collective bargaining, she was a long-time advocate for nurses' rights, always on the front lines of an MNA rally. Shirley also served on the Cooley Dickinson Hospital Collective Bargaining Unit and was a Massachusetts Nurses Association Board Member. Anyone who ever had the pleasure of knowing her knew that she was smart, witty, passionate, fearless and a true inspiration.



North Adams Rally: Restore a Full Service Hospital

On March 28, 2014, North Adams Regional Hospital closed its doors, leaving the 37,000 residents of North County without access to local, comprehensive healthcare. Since that time, nurses, community members, and MNA staff have called on the new owners of the hospital, Berkshire Health Systems (BHS), to provide inpatient care to this community. That call has gone unanswered. On March 28, the community, now the North County Cares Coalition (NCCC), commemorated the one-year anniversary of the closure with a caravan from North Adams to Pittsfield to again call upon BHS to respond to North County's real and urgent healthcare needs by reopening inpatient services at the hospital, now BMC-North.



Pictured Above: MNA Associate Director, Nykole Roche speaks at the rally outside of BMC Hospital

The North County Cares Coalition, of which MNA is a member, continues to hold events throughout the region, highlighting the Northern Berkshires' need for a full-service hospital. Events have included an April talk at Williams College featuring Dr. Stephen Martin, a professor, rural healthcare expert, and primary care physician in Barre, MA, and MNA Associate Director, Nykole Roche, author of *Berkshire Medical Center North (BMCN): The Case for Restoring a Full-Service Hospital for Northern Berkshire County*.



NCCC also sponsored an event in May at the Council on Aging in North Adams to discuss the disparity in access to healthcare throughout the Berkshires. NCCC continues to hold weekly Tuesday night meetings at the American Legion Hall in North Adams. Contact MNA's Community Organizer, Diane Scherrer, at dscherrer@mnarn.org to find out how to add your voice to this coalition.

Pictured left: Judi Sharp of BMC speaking at the rally outside of BMC Hospital.

Bargaining Unit Updates



Providence Hospital nurses after participating in the ratification process.

Providence Hospital

Contract was ratified on Tuesday, November 25, 2014.

Highlights include: An annual across the board increase spread over three years, a new pension plan that has a guaranteed 3% hospital “core” contribution regardless of whether an RN contributes or not, increases in 3-11 shift differential and Charge Nurse Pay, an increase in Preceptor Pay from \$1.00 per hour to \$2.00 per hour and increases in Degree Differential. There are close to 30 RNs or 42% with their BSN and 2 RNs with an MSN, revisions to the Mandatory OT Language to comply with the 2012 Law, increases to Tuition Reimbursement , and improvements to Bereavement Language .

Mercy Medical Center

Contract was ratified on Monday, November 24, 2014. Highlights include: An annual across the board increase spread over three years, a new pension plan that has a 3% hospital “core” contribution regardless of whether an RN contributes or not, an increase in 3-11 shift differential, an increase in Preceptor Pay and a \$250.00 bonus for taking the class on work time, increases in Degree Differential that will benefit over 1/3 of our members, revisions to the Mandatory OT Language to comply with the 2012 Law, and increases to Tuition Reimbursement.



Pictured above and bottom left: Mercy nurses after participating in the ratification process.



Cooley Dickinson Hospital

We successfully fended off deep cuts to the contract, including the total removal of daily overtime as well as mandatory forced shift cancellation, to come out on top with a contract that continues to protect nurses and patients.

REGIONAL COUNCIL ONE*OFFICERS*

Chair, Patty Healey, Brigham & Woman's Hospital

Vice Chair, Gail Bean, West. Mass. Hospital, Retired

Secretary, Irene Patch, UNIT 7- Holyoke Soldier's Home

Treasurer, Chris Folsom, UNIT 7-DMR Community Services West

BARGAINING UNIT SEATS

Chris Clark, Baystate VNA

Alexander Neary, Berkshire Medical Center

Gerri Jakacky, Berkshire Medical Center

Sally Surgen, Cooley Dickinson Hospital

Marie Etkin, Cooley Dickinson Hospital

Linda Judd, Baystate Franklin Medical Center

Donna Stern, Baystate Franklin Medical Center

Stephen Mikelis, Mercy Hospital

Paul Dubin, Noble Hospital

Pam Fournier, Noble Hospital

Diane Sampson, Providence Hospital

Cindy Chaplin, Providence Hospital

Leslie Campbell, VNA & Hospice at Cooley Dickinson Hospital

Sheryl Moriarty, VNA & Hospice at Cooley Dickinson Hospital

Laurie Scripter, West Springfield School Nurses

Elizabeth Bonafilia, West Springfield School Nurses

Avon Maxwell, Vibra Springfield

UNIT 7

Chris Folsom, UNIT 7- DMR Community Services West

Carol Konrad, UNIT 7-Holyoke Soldiers Home

Mary Turner, UNIT 7-Pittsfield Public Health

Save the Dates

⇒ **End of Summer Annual Retreat!**

Where: Lady Bea Cruise, 1 Alvord St. South Hadley MA 01075

When: Monday, August 10, 2015 from 5 - 7 p.m.

Description: The MNA Region One Council members invite all Region One members (plus one guest) to join them for a 75 minute narrated cruise up the Connecticut River from Brunelle's Marina to Northampton. Complimentary appetizers will be provided and there will be a cash bar available.

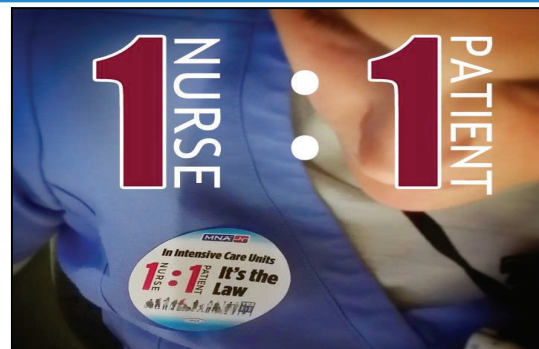
Space is limited! Please RSVP to Office Manager, Allyson Garcia, at 413-584-4607 or region1@mnarn.org

⇒ **Convention 2015**

When: October 8, 2015

Where: Hyannis, MA more details TBA

⇒ **Labor School is back in Region One!** If you are interested in getting details about when and where classes are located, please contact Office Manager, Allyson Garcia, at 413-584-4607 or region1@mnarn.org.



Bargaining Unit Updates continued

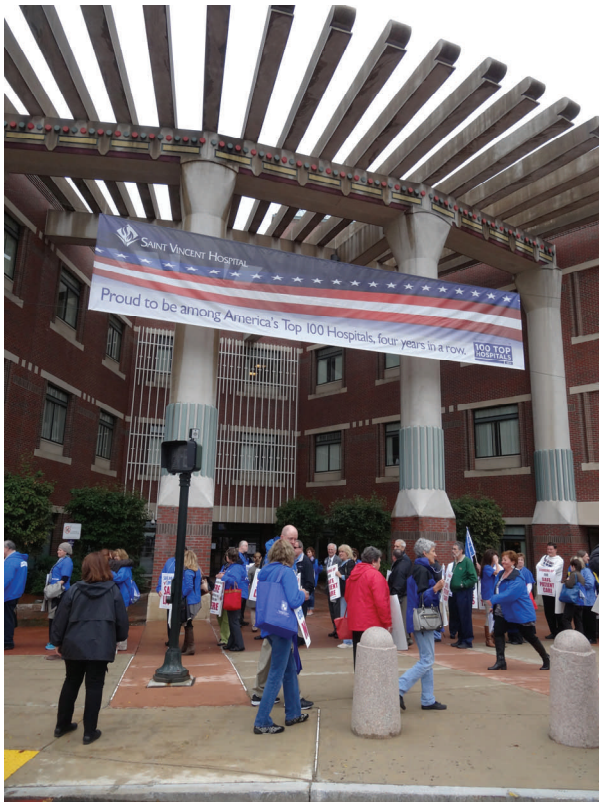
Baystate Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice:

After six jam packed sessions with two MNA negotiators, MNA members unanimously ratified a new contract on Tuesday, May 19, 2015. Highlights include: No takeaways, continuation of time and one half for weekend work, effective May 24, 2015 added new step at the top at 1.25% increment. For nurses currently at the Seniority Step (with 15 years with the Agency), added 1.25% Longevity Step that nurses will move on to on their anniversary date.

Berkshire Medical Center

On December 10, Berkshire Medical Center nurses braved the snow, cold and wind to enlist the support of the community to force the management of BMC to listen to their concerns about the unsafe staffing levels and punitive work environment at the hospital. Due to the closure of the North Adams Regional Hospital, patient numbers have increased dramatically at BMC. The committee continues to press BMC management to bring staffing to appropriate, safe levels. Most recently, critical care nurses participated in the 1 Nurse to 1 Patient ICU sticker campaign to inform patients of their rights under the new ICU safe staffing law.

Convention 2014



Above: MNA Nurses rallying outside of St. Vincent's Hospital.
Below: Region One Chair Patty Healey, Convention speaker John Nichols, and MNA Region One Rep Andrea Fox.



Above: Picket line outside of St. Vincent's Hospital. Below: Linda Judd, Alice Manica, Donna Stern and Patty Healey outside of St. Vincent's Hospital.



Below: Gail Bean, Liz Shepard, Sherry Ferrier and Irene Patch at Awards Night





HELICOPTER BALLDROP — FUNDRAISER —

An exciting return of our fundraising event to benefit Massachusetts Nurses Foundation's scholarship & research programs for nursing & healthcare professionals.

Donate to receive a numbered golf ball that will be released from a Helicopter at the conclusion of the golf tournament



Monday, June 15, 2015

at Indian Pond Country Club, Kingston, MA

Join the Fun and help MNF! \$20 Donation per Ball

Prize award based on a maximum 1,000 balls purchased and \$20,000 funds raised (award actual 20% of balls purchased).

About the Massachusetts Nurses Foundation

The Massachusetts Nurses Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, established in 1981, whose mission is to support scholarship & research in nursing.

The primary goal of the MNF is to advance the profession of nursing by supporting the education of nurses and healthcare professionals. The foundation provides:

- Scholarships & grants to nurses and students of nursing.

- Administration of scholarship funds for alumni associations, schools of nursing, organizations, foundations & individuals interested in nursing.

The MNF raises funds and dispenses scholarships & grants to qualified recipients who have applied for assistance to further their careers or study clinical issues that are essential to the improvement of health care.

Massachusetts Nurses Foundation • 340 Turnpike Street • Canton, MA 02021

Questions? Contact Cindy Messia at 781-821-4625 X720

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WE'RE ON THE WEB

WWW.MASSNURSES.ORG

WWW.MASSNURSES.ORG/REGION1

Regional Council One is a unit of the MNA/NNU. The Regional Council supports the MNA bargaining units, the Massachusetts Nurses Foundation and the MNA PAC in promoting the primary functions of education, political organizing, democratic member involvement and support for collective bargaining. The Regional Council also promotes education for professional activities, regional coalitions of MNA bargaining units and general members interested in advocacy. The Regional Council is accountable to the regional membership and the MNA Board of Directors and acts in accordance with general MNA policies and bylaws.

The Regional Council meets every fourth Monday of the month in the Region One office. Region One has several committees that we invite members to join: Education, Finance, Health and Safety, History, Legislative, Newsletter, and Scholarship Committees. Let your voice be heard, join us!

Call the Region One office for more information: 413-584-4607.

REGION ONE NURSE is published three times a year by Regional Council One. It is a publication made available to MNA Region One members to inform and meet member needs by providing information on nursing, health care, and labor issues. We invite our members to submit items to the newsletter, especially through the editorial voice. A strong democratic union requires an informed membership. All submissions are subject to editing and none will be returned. For more information contact the Region One office at 413-584-4607 or email: region1@mnarn.org



MNA Nurses kick off the “ICU Law: One Nurse to One Patient Sticker Campaign” to educate the public that if and when their loved ones are in the ICU, they should expect one on one attention from an RN – it’s the law.