During my second year, I became a registered nurse. My experiences with the Student Nurses Association led me to become a joint member of the American Nurses Association and Nebraska Nurses Association, and most recently a member of the Emergency Nurses Association.

In my experience, being active in a student nurse organization allows the student nurse to start developing the skills necessary for the professional role. Involvement leads to improved communication, organization, and leadership skills. Running for and holding an officer position teaches responsibility and allows the student nurse to become more accustomed to how professional meetings are conducted. Being an active member greatly increases your marketability by showing your commitment to the profession even as a student.

Once the ever daunting boards are passed, membership to a professional nursing organization can be very beneficial. In the three and one-half years that I have been a RN, I have found both of my professional nursing organizations to be very influential to the nurse that I have become. Membership allows access to information to keep up-to-date on the ever changing world of healthcare and healthcare policies. Professional nursing organizations usually have many different avenues to bring this information to you. Webinars, newsletters, magazines, journals, and all kinds of social media outlets are available to members. Being a member of professional nursing organizations also allows access to LISTSERVs, which are essential communication pieces where nursing colleagues from across the nation can post questions and responses to critical needs. LISTSERVs often lead to a sharing of evidence based practice, protocols, and a method of validating that other colleagues are having similar issues. As a “new” nurse, these LISTSERVS can be quite beneficial to peruse as they often lead a nurse to create change in his/her practice prior to even recognizing there was a potential issue. Another benefit to membership of a professional nursing organization for the “new” nurse is mentorship outside of your current employer. Becoming a member allows the “new” nurse access to network with colleagues who have a wealth of knowledge and experience to share.

One of the most important reasons for becoming a member in a professional nursing organization is to help elicit change in our profession. Nursing organizations are often the political voices that help to increase the safety of our practice by either supporting or actively opposing certain legislation. No longer will you be just one nurse.

There are a few expectations of membership in a professional nursing organization as a “new” nurse, but they are pretty simple. The first of which is to get involved! The future of any professional nursing organization is dependent on the involvement of new nurses. We need to learn from our experienced nurse leaders in order to be the voice of nursing in the future. The constantly changing healthcare system needs new and experienced nurses alike to offer suggestions to current challenges. Make sure that you subscribe to the journals that are usually a part of your membership and stay up-to-date with the organizations website and emails. The second expectation of membership is to encourage your colleagues to become members of the professional nursing organization. Numbers are power! The more nurses advocate for a particular interest, the more likely it will be heard. The third and final expectation is that you take advantage of the educational opportunities provided by the organization. Webinars and conferences are great learning tools and typically offer Continuing Education credits for your attendance.

It is my hope that I have conveyed enough importance for belonging to at least one professional nursing organization. The future of nursing depends on it.

Keep in mind that without you, our voice gets weaker by one.

Chad is a NNA member living in the District 6 area. He is employed as a Staff Nurse at Avera St. Anthony’s Hospital in O’Neill, Nebraska. Chad was an active member of the Student Nurses Association Chapter at Northeast Community College while he completed his Associate Degree in Nursing.
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NNA’s Mission:
The mission of the Nebraska Nurses Association is to foster higher standards for nursing practice, stimulate and promote the professional development of nurses, and advance their professional security, and to work for the improvement of health standards and availability of health care services for all people. (Adopted 10/95, NNA House of Delegates)

NNA’s Vision:
Nebraska Nurses Association will be an effective voice for nurses; and an advocate for Nebraska consumers on issues relating to health. (Affirmed 12/04/2004, NNA Board of Directors)

Critical Success Factors for Vision:
• State and districts set mutual priorities
• Evaluate the success of the restructuring of NNA
• Enhance grass roots activities for membership involvement
• Advocate for statewide quality healthcare (Affirmed 12/04/2004, NNA Board of Directors)

NNA’s Core Issues:
1. Workplace Rights
2. Appropriate Staffing
3. Workplace Health & Safety
4. Continuing Competence

NNA’s Official Publication:
The Nebraska Nurse is the official publication of the Nebraska Nurses Association (NNA) (a constituent member of the American Nurses Association), published quarterly every March, June, September and December. The NNA provides education, networking opportunities, publications and other products and services to its members and extends its mission to all nurses in Nebraska.
Phone: (888) 885–7025
You can leave a message at any time.
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Web site: www.NebraskaNurses.org
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Questions about your nursing license?
Contact the Nebraska Board of Nursing at:
(402) 471–4376.
The NBON is part of the Nebraska Health and Human Services System Regulation and Licensing.
Questions about stories in the Nebraska Nurse?
Contact: NNA.

This newsletter is a service of the Nebraska Nurses Association and your receipt of it does not mean you are automatically a member. Your membership in support of this work is encouraged; please visit www.nebraskanurses.org.

Photo on front page: Scotts Bluff National Monument Photo by: M. Forsberg, Nebraska DEO
“Scotts Bluff was one of the key geographic landmarks pioneers sought on their journeys westward.”

Writer’s Guidelines:
Any topic related to nursing will be considered for publication in the Nebraska Nurse. Although authors are not required to be members of NNA, when space is limited, preference will be given to NNA members.
Photos are welcomed, digital is preferred. The NNA assumes no responsibility for lost or damaged photos.
Submitted material is due by the 12th of the month in January, April, July and October of each year.
You may submit your material in the following ways:
Prepared as a Word document and attach it to an e-mail sent to anna@nebraskanurses.org.

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Teresa Anderson, EdD, MSN, RNC-OB, NE-BC

And so it begins...a new year, a new opportunity. I look at each New Year as 365 days to potentially make a difference - to make a difference for my family, friends, associates, and for myself. Like many who are drawn to a profession in nursing, I have a "service" orientation and find satisfaction in reflecting at the end of the day, week, and month on the kindness, support, personal learning, and hopefully role-modeling accomplished. And just as we don’t always accomplish all the resolutions we propose at the beginning of the year, I often fall short of my own expectations, and perhaps those of others. It is difficult at times to actually know what others are thinking and expecting. We make assumptions and position our own expectations on what we believe to be true. Assumptions can get us into trouble, but they can also open for us the door to new opportunities.

In 2011, when I was installed as the President-Elect for the NNA, I assumed that I would have a year of learning; followed by two years as the leader of this amazing association, navigating through the usual meetings, events, and financial planning. Little did any of us know what truly laid ahead for us, and little did I expect to be negotiating through some exciting changes.

We hit the ground running (for the life of our Association!) in October 2012 as we embraced the opportunity to be part of the ANA Midwest Multi-State Division Pilot. With leadership, a plan and team to accomplish operations, and embarked on streamlining our structures and processes to make them more relevant. The primary work of 2015 will be “governance revision” and “operations.” As we enter the second year of our District Pilot, we will be determining our new governance and decision-making strategies. Streamlining and consolidating the structures and processes that consume our resources while we simultaneously continue to automate and expand services and member value. In January, we began our search for a part-time administrative assistant, to support our Director and Board; and by year’s end we will finalize revised policies and procedures, sustaining the success into the future.

Our goal for easy member access to valuable, essential, and empowering information is within sight. This summer and fall we will elect, for the first time in five years, a new leader to whom I can pass the torch; a next generation visionary who will connect with the nurses in Nebraska and continue to honor our values of collaboration, advocacy, respect, and education. A strong and skilled Board leader to provide the strategic direction so that our staff can further our vision “to be a proactive voice for nurses and an advocate for improved health for all.” With access and commitment to all Nebraska nurses, regardless of position, specialty, or work setting, we will continue to rebuild the best association to provide a strong voice for all nurses.

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Stressed, burned out, overworked, compassion fatigue... all terms that have been used to describe the impact of the high stakes, high stress profession that is nursing. The comprehensive health of nurses is one of the biggest challenges facing our profession, and one that ultimately impacts its health and well-being. The American Nurses Association (ANA) recognized this challenge and has made providing health resources a priority.

Healthy Nurses, Healthy Nursing

According to the ANA, a healthy nurse is “one who actively focuses on creating and maintaining a balance and synergy of physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, personal and professional wellbeing. A healthy nurse lives life to the fullest capacity, across the wellness/illness continuum, as they become stronger role models, advocates, and educators, personally, for their families, their communities and work environments, and ultimately for their patients.” This statement serves as the foundation of ANA’s Healthy Nurse Program. The program includes a toolkit containing resources on topics ranging from healthy behaviors such as sleep and tobacco cessation to workplace violence and environmental safety for nurses. The program also provides a HIPAA compliant health risk appraisal to help nurses evaluate their personal and professional health status.

In addition to the healthy nurse resources included in the online tool kit ANA has established professional issues panels to examine the issues of nurse fatigue, workplace violence and incivility, and the revision of the scope and standards of practice for nursing. The Nurse Fatigue Panel completed deliberation and released their findings in October of 2014. The Workplace Violence and Incivility Panel and Scope of Standards and Practice Revision were convened last year and are beginning their discussions. Their findings will be released through the ANA website and publications. All ANA/NNA members are eligible to apply to serve on a Professional Issues Panel, and NNA member Karen Wiley MSN, RN, CEN serves on the advisory board for the Workplace Violence and Incivility Panel.

Why does our national nursing organization direct significant resources to the health and personal well being of nurses? The ability of nurses to care for themselves directly impacts their ability to care for their patients and the profession of nursing. The capacity of an individual to care for those in their sphere of influence is directly related to their personal health. The capacity to engage and advocate around issues of vital importance to nursing (for example barriers to practice, workplace safety, and access to care) also stems from the well being of the individual affected by these issues.

As you read this article the urgency and optimism of New Year’s resolutions will have faded, but the importance of health and making positive life changes has not. Take a few moments to complete the Health Risk Assessment, and then commit to addressing an area of concern. The health of the nursing profession depends on the health of nurses. To achieve healthy outcomes for nurses, patients, and the nursing profession each of us must make this commitment. In the coming months NNA will address many important issues for the organization and nursing profession through the legislative process. We need the healthy voices of our members to guide and direct the decision-making.

The Health Risk Assessment portal is available on the Nebraska Nurses Association website: www.nebraskanurses.org. To access the complete healthy nurses toolkit visit: http://nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/WorkplaceSafety/Healthy-Nurse.

Melissa Florell, MSN RN

Thank you to our dedicated nursing staff during National Nurses Week 2015. If you are interested in joining our team contact us today! Audrey Murphy, People Development Coordinator 2235 Lodge Dr., Gering, NE 69341 amurphy687@gmail.com For more information about Heritage Estates visit: www.heritageestates-spring.com
Midwest Multi-State Division Update

Jill Kliethermes, Midwest Multistate Division Leader

It is a pleasure and an honor to be able to serve as the Midwest Multistate Division Lead of an amazing group of Midwest State Nurses Associations and to work with some of the most incredible, hardworking, distinguished, educated, and collaborative registered nurses. The second year of the Midwest Multistate Division (MSD) pilot is well underway. The MW MSD pilot has been both exciting and challenging as we try to come together to increase operating efficiencies in order to build membership and advocacy efforts in the state nurses associations. The following states are currently included in the Midwest MSD: Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and North Dakota. There are two additional Multistate Divisions being piloted which includes the Northeast MSD (RI, NH, ME, CT and VT) and the West MSD (UT, CO, ID and AZ).

There have been many successes as a result of the pilot; however a notable success has been the Midwest Multistate Division Continuing Nursing Education Unit (MW MSD CNE Unit) being launched. To learn more about the MW MSD continuing education approval process, please contact the MW MSD Office at 573-636-4623 or email questions@midwestnurses.org.

Through our pilot we found several opportunities to increase operating efficiencies within the participating state nurses associations (SNAs) which have included:

• Launching a call center within the MSD to enable all SNAs to have a phone number and have the phone answered by an attendant.
• Offering financial and accounting services within the MSD and reducing individual SNA expenditures for these services with other service providers.
• Providing common policies and procedure templates to support SNA operations.
• Identifying nurse planners to help plan events co-provided within the MSD.
• Instituted a weekly Professional RN Update publication “Lighting the Way.”
• Monthly leadership calls with the SNAs. Monthly membership/marketing taskforce calls with the SNAs.
• Obtained group purchasing/contracts for services discounts for the SNAs.
• MSD Lead participating in SNAs board meetings for consultation.

The Midwest MSD will continue to work on implementing a stream-lined business operations model that leverages common capabilities of the SNAs and ANA to enhance the multistate operations. Through this joint, collaborative effort the Midwest MSD will be more efficient and profitable, allow for more effective advocacy and membership recruitment, and retention efforts in the SNAs. The overarching goal is for the SNAs to grow and become more vital and visible in the future.

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The Denver Post
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Prefered Image of Nursing Award Breakfast

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To apply for this position, please send a cover letter, résumé, list of three references, unofficial college transcripts, and a completed Miles Community College application to:

Kylene Phipps, Human Resources Director, Miles Community College, 2715 Dickinson Street, Miles City MT 59301 or you may e-mail your application materials to humanresources@milescc.edu.

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For further information about this employment opportunity and a MCC application please view our website at www.milescc.edu.

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Trivia Questions

Question: What important milestone for professional nursing in Nebraska occurred in 1908?

Answer: The bill for registration and licensure was passed. Names were submitted by the Association to the governor as candidates for appointment to the Nurses Examining Board. Miss Victoria Anderson, Miss Catherine M. Wollgast, and Miss Anna E. Hardwick were appointed.

Question: In what year and location was the first annual meeting of the Nebraska State Nurses Association held outside of Omaha or Lincoln?

Answer: The first annual meeting of SSNA to be held outside of Lincoln or Omaha was held in Hastings in 1939.

Membership Application

**NEBRASKA NURSES ASSOCIATION**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

**STEP 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION**

First Name/Initial(s):

Middle Name/Initial(s):

Last Name/Initial(s):

Address:

City/State/Zip Code:

Email:

Home Phone:

Work Phone:

Cell Phone:

**STEP 2: MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS**

Choose one annual or monthly membership option. (Monthly payments include a 2.5% interest surcharge for no 12 months.)

**FULL MEMBERSHIP – NNA/ANA**

- $399.00/Year or $33.25/Monthly

**REduced MEMBERSHIP – NNA/ANA**

- $199.50/Year or $16.63/Monthly

**NEBRASKA ONLY MEMBERSHIP – NNA**

- $119.50/Year or $9.96/Monthly

**SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP – NNA/ANA**

- $59.75/Year or $5.03/Monthly

**STEP 3: TOTAL DUES**

Depending on your membership option, first year or first month is due with completed application.

**TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: $_______**

**STEP 4: PAYMENT OPTIONS**

- Check payable to Nebraska Nurses Association
- MasterCard or Visa

**STEP 5: SUBMIT APPLICATION**

Return completed application and payment to:

**NEBRASKA NURSES ASSOCIATION**

P.O. BOX 3107, Kearney, NE 68848

Questions? Call NNA 888-885-7025 or visit our website www.nebraskanurses.org

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Call for Candidates - 2015 Election of NNA Officers and Committees

Please consider offering your time and talents to the Nebraska Nurses Association (NNA) by adding your name to the 2015 ballot. This is a very exciting time for NNA as the reorganization continues and is a wonderful opportunity to serve as we implement the vision for NNA's future. Simply complete the Leadership Profile form on the NNA Website and submit to Melissa Florell by March 15. These are 2 year terms, except for President Elect, which is a 1-year term, followed by a 2-year term as President. Offices and Committee positions open for the 2015 election include:

President-Elect (2015-16)/President (2016-18)

The President-Elect of NNA will assume duties of the President in the President’s absence or at the discretion of the President; serve as a non-voting member of all three Committees; and assume other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

The President of NNA will serve as the official representative of the Association and as its spokesperson on matters of Association policy and position; serve as the chairperson of the NNA House of Delegates, the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee of the Board; and serve as an ex-officio member of all Committees; appoint special Committees and/or task forces of the Board of Directors and may fulfill other duties as designated by the Board of Directors; serve as a representative to the ANA Membership Assembly, and may appoint a designee, if unable to attend.

Vice President (2015-17)

The Vice President of NNA will assume the duties of the President in the absence of both the President and President-elect, or at the discretion of the President; promote events through a variety of means in collaboration with the director; and assume other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

Secretary (2015-17)

The secretary of NNA will be responsible for ensuring that records are maintained of meetings of the NNA House of Delegates, the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee of the Board; notify constituent members of meetings of the NNA House of Delegates; and assume other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

Legislative, Advocacy, and Representation Committee (LARC) (5 positions)

The role of the Legislative Advocacy and Representation Committee will be to plan and implement activities related to professional security and nurse advocacy and to represent NNA’s positions on state and local concerns, as defined by NNA’s approved legislative platform.

Nursing Professional Development Committee (NPDC) (5 positions)

The role of the Nursing Professional Development Committee will be to plan and implement activities related to nursing professional development and oversee continuing education accreditation activities.

Governance, Finance, and Membership Committee (GFMC) (4 positions)

The Governance, Finance, and Membership Committee shall provide infrastructure guidance and recommendations to the Board of Directors related to membership recruitment and retention, recruitment of qualified candidates for NNA elected and appointed positions, and oversight of financial operations on behalf of the Board of Directors.

Also, NNA has begun to solicit interested members to serve as District Delegates to the 2015 NNA House of Delegates. If you have any questions about serving as a Delegate, please feel free to contact the GFMC Chair Lois Linden (llinden@csm.edu) or Anna Mackevicius (anna@nebraskanurses.org). The NNA website will have a webpage for interested individuals to submit their name as a Delegate candidate. The number of Delegates by District allotted for the 2015 NNA House of Delegates (total of 77):

- District 1: 5
- District 2: 33
- District 3: 19
- District 4: 9
- District 5: 4
- District 6: 4
- District 7: 2
- District 9: 1

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There will be several opportunities for nurses to become participants in the legislative processes in the year to come. Access the NNA website (www.nebraskanurses.org) to review the Legislative Bill Tracker. Read the content, contact your legislator for information, or contact a member of Nebraska’s Legislative Committee. Find your voice and take part in supporting our profession. There will be more to come with the new legislative session; keep yourself informed of the issues.

The New Year brings Nurses Day at the Legislature on February 12th. Last year in February, the largest gathering of nurses, student nurses (of all scopes of practices), and legislators was welcomed. You are cordially invited and encouraged to attend!

And, as a final note, the Celebrate Nursing Breakfast will be held in Omaha on Saturday, April 25th at a new venue, the Scott Conference Center. There will be information posted on the NNA website as the event details are planned. Nominate a nurse for peer recognition – we seldom realize what a wonderful difference is made in the lives we touch each and every day by those who stand beside us.

To each and every nurse and his/her family, I extend best wishes for a very happy and brilliant new year. Remember to use your smile often and without hesitation!

**District 5**

Kim Smith

Hello fellow nurses of Nebraska. Here in Western Nebraska we are still observing regular meetings and trying to stay involved with the rest of the state as best we can. We had our annual 5K run/walk back in August and plan to continue this tradition. We use all proceeds from this run for scholarships for local nursing students. These scholarships can be used for expenses accumulated from school or for going to SNA retreats. We are in the process of planning a spring gathering for our nursing students and working on organizing a nurses’ day of relaxation night. As always we are having a great time out there in the West and hope the rest of you are doing well and continuing to enjoy life as a Nebraska Nurse.

**District 9**

Cathy Clark Sybrant

District 9 has not been meeting but I would like to speak to all the nurses in Holt, Keya Paha, Brown, Rock, Cherry, and Garfield counties. The NNA needs you to be a voice for rural nurses. Since we live in the middle of nowhere, we need an organization that is watching out for us and the future of nursing? Yes, you need an organization that watches out for us and the future of nursing?

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Understanding Continuing Nursing Education

Mary Jean “MJ” Petersen

Technology is on the move at NNA. We are now using technology offered by “Go to Meeting,” which allows NNA members to share documents and information in real time. NNA will be able to conduct continuing education for our members in the future in a webinar format with this technology.

In addition, the NNA officers and committees are using “Go to Meeting” or “Google Hangout” for meetings. This allows members to use their computers and web cams to view each other but remain at home or the office for calls. Google Hangout is free.

CQ Roll call is our advocacy database/software program that NNA has purchased through the Multi-State Division. This program is embedded in the website and allows NNA to send legislative alerts to members in a more automated and timely fashion. Look for an increase in updates this legislative session.

For those of you that have a QR code reader on your cell phone or iPad, you can use the code below to go directly to the NNA home page.

For those of you that need an application to read QR codes, QRReader is a free app for the iPhone and Android devices:

1. Download the QRReader app
2. Click on the app to open
3. Focus the code in the frame on your screen and the website should then open.

All nurses understand the importance of maintaining competence and professional development. Healthcare is changing at such a rapid pace it is difficult to keep up with the terminology, let alone the many facets of providing quality care. Continuing nursing education takes on an even greater importance today.

It does take a “mind-shift,” however, to move away from the old thought process of obtaining “CEUs” based on seat time and moving toward educational activities that have measureable quality outcomes. Add into the mix the growing awareness that interprofessional education furthers the increase in quality patient outcomes. It is toward these desirable outcomes that accreditation of continuing education strengthens the educational activities and what is learned. The three major healthcare related continuing education accreditation bodies; the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) and the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) are working together on supporting the standards, terminology, forms, requirements and processes involved in providing continuing education to benefit both the practitioners and their clients.

These efforts are seen to help streamline the necessary assessment, gap analysis, planning, coordinating and evaluation of educational activities – all important steps that support quality continuing education. Unless the nurse is involved in CNE, one may not realize the detailed work behind the lecture, workshop or conference they attend. At times the “rules and requirements” may seem to get in the way as they do not allow for quick and easy “approval.” They do however help establish a “Scope and Standards of Practice” that guides the educational activity to ensure valuable learning and professional development. These standards are what sets an accredited educational event apart from those that may be non-peer reviewed or state Board of Nursing approved.

Today the options for continuing nursing education are exploding. No longer are there just lunch-n-learn lectures, or all day workshops. Now technology such as webinars and on-line courses place the education at our finger tips 24/7 where ever we may be. It is important therefore, to make sure that the educational activities are offered by an ANCC Accredited Provider or Approved Provider. This information must be stipulated so that the learner is able to decide prior to the event if this activity meets the necessary requirements for their specific licensure or certification.

Activities that have been approved directly by the Midwest Multistate Division or a Midwest Multistate Division Approved Provider meet the current ANCC criteria and requirements for quality continuing nursing education.

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