



# NYS MR/DD NURSES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Fall 2008

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## President's Message

Fall Greetings to all of our DD nurses out there! I hope that everyone is enjoying the changing leaves, the fall breezes and all of the great things that fall in New England has to offer! As President of the NYSMRDDNA, I would like to extend a very warm and heartfelt welcome to our newest members, all of the nurses that have recently joined our field. Welcome to the family! I would like to extend a personal recognition and thank you to all of you, who lend support to individuals, staff, and families on a daily basis. You are needed, you are valued, and you are special. It is through your influence that the lives of the individuals you support are made better each and every day! I would also like to thank you for a wonderful year and the chance to serve you as President of the NYSMRDDNA. I have enjoyed meeting so many of you, and I hope to continue to serve you in the future! I sincerely hope that you were able to attend our fall conference...it was a great one! Blessings to you,

*Anne Hanson RN, BSN, CDDN  
President*

## Membership Committee Report

We welcome new members Joyce Dominick-Schaefer, Karen Treharne, Patricia Ruckel, Janet Griffis, Sandra Hyatt, Tanya Lucas, Deborah Greene, Karen Drosch, Karen Hockey, Michael Culligan, Yvonne Powell, Karen Kerendian, Judith Yount, Valerie Kingsley, Doreen Oleksyn, Michelle Ryan, Cindy Scunziano, Robin Theis, Jennifer Martin, and Marjorie Bach.

*Cathy Engel, Membership Chairperson*

## Scholarship Winner Attends Annual Conference

I just wanted to take the time to send you and the nurses association committee a thank you for choosing me for the scholarship. I had a wonderful time at the conference and look forward to participating in future years. Once again thank you for the wonderful opportunity.

*Pam Hollington*

## President Elect's Message

2008 has been a year of change. The forces that have influenced those changes have been political, economical, along with staffing and nursing shortages. Then there are the changing health needs of the individuals. In the blink of an eye another conference is over. I have found that the conference energizes oneself to refocus on the issues and stay current of new knowledge.

Through out my years with the NYS MR/DD Nurses Association my source of information and guidance has come from the members of this association. Nurses entering the field of MR/DD (ID) soon discover this is a whole new specialty in which to work. The nurses from the local zone and zones throughout the state have collectively shared their experiences and knowledge. Change is constant...Learning is constant.

Welcome new members and thank you current members. The association is entering its 25<sup>th</sup> year. This is an association that provides the support, knowledge and guidance to ensure individuals of ID receive quality care.

Peace & Joy

*Mary Ellen Stammersky, RN  
President Elect*

## ZONE REPORTS

### **News About Zone Members Wanted for Future Newsletters.**

Please send any bits of news about zone members – retirements, awards, special events, degrees or certifications earned, etc. to Pam Wellman at [Pamela.wellman@omr.state.ny.us](mailto:Pamela.wellman@omr.state.ny.us)

### **Zone #1 (St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton and Essex Counties)**

The last meeting was held on Thursday, November 6 @ 11am at Gallagher's Restaurant on Route 11, Malone (opposite K-Mart Mall).

*Trish Potocar, Co-Chairperson*

### **Zone #2 (Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego, Onondaga, Oneida, Madison and Herkimer Counties)**

The September meeting was hosted by Oneida-Madison ARC with guest speakers Kathleen Keating and Fred Wetzel providing us with OMRDD updates. Next meeting is scheduled for December 18 from 11am-2pm. Stay tuned...

*Pam Wellman, Chairperson*

### **Zone #3 (Hamilton, Fulton, Warren, Washington and Saratoga Counties)**

The Zone 3 Nurses would like to extend a warm fall greeting to all of our fellow DD nurses in the field! We have been very busy over the last few months. Our Zone 3 Chair, Anne Hanson, participated in a joint presentation at the DDNA Conference with Steven Zalenski, MD on the topic of Pain Assessment and Management in the DD Population. In addition, Anne presented at the DDEN Conference in Rochester, NY on the subject of a Team Approach to End of Life Care.

In addition, we would like to announce election results for Zone 3:

Anne Hanson BS, RN, CDDN- Zone 3 Chair  
Valerie Capone, RN- Zone 3 Treasurer  
Cindy Scunziano, RN- Secretary  
Lisa Godfrey, RN- Zone 3 Representative

Our last meetings were held on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at the Holiday Inn in Saratoga Springs, with a presentation on diabetes management and on November 13<sup>th</sup> in Amsterdam, NY. Anyone who wishes further information pertaining to Zone activities may feel free to contact any of the Zone Officers. All our welcome to join us and we would love to see you!

*Anne Hanson, Chairperson*

### **Zone #4 (Montgomery, Schoharie, Schenectady, Albany, Otsego, Delaware, Greene, Rensselaer and Columbia Counties)**

Please plan to join us on *December 3, 2008* for our holiday luncheon meeting which will be held at the Marriott on Wolf Rd in Colonie from **11:30AM - 2 PM**. An Italian buffet luncheon is covered for all current members of Zone 4. Non-members, please submit a check for \$33 (cost of the luncheon) to Mary made out to: *NYS MR/DD Nurses Association Zone 4*.

For 2009, we've scheduled our quarterly meetings for:

- Wednesday 3/11/09 @ 9 AM with light breakfast foods, Place TBA
- Wednesday 6/10/09 in Oneonta with luncheon
- Wednesday 9/16/09 @ 9 AM with light breakfast foods. Placed TBA
- Wednesday 12/02/09 luncheon meeting TBA

Currently we're recruiting for a *Zone Secretary* and 2 additional *Zone Representatives for a 2 year term beginning 1/1/09*. If interested in either of these positions, please submit a brief professional biography to Mary Boisvert at the above email or address. Biographies of interested candidates should focus on the goal of the organization which is to foster professional development within the clinical scope of Developmental Disability Nursing Practice.

Biographies submitted by November 19, 2008 will be forwarded to the Zone membership for election through confidential ballot at our December 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

*Mary Boisvert & Julie Heneka (co-chairs)*

**Zone #5 (Sullivan, Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Westchester Counties)**

Dennis Greenwald presented at our June meeting. Membership voted in Sandy Mellion (845-709-5087) and Madlyn Vaillancourt (914)522-6722 as co-chairs. (Congrats!) Melodie Tompkins, RN (845-796-8579 has agreed to be the Sullivan County rep. This addition will assist nurses who would otherwise have to travel to Rockland County. (Thanks Melodie!) The last zone meeting was October 15 @ 12:30pm in Sparkill. Pat Parks from the County Health Department spoke about Lyme disease.

*Madlyn Vaillancourt, Representative & Treasurer*

**Zone #6 (Suffolk County)**

We are in the process of scheduling a November meeting at a Western Suffolk location. Date/time will be announced soon. It will be an update of information from annual conference and an open forum to share ideas/suggestion. We will also be looking for nominations for chairpersons. Dinner will be served at the meeting. Look forward to seeing all of you. Bring a nursing friend. Email me to be added to my contact list. For convenience, invites will be sent by email unless you notify me otherwise.

*Tracy Kotkiewicz RN, Zone 6 Treasurer*

**Zones #9 and 11 (9-Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany and Steuben Counties) and (11-Monroe, Wayne, Ontario, Livingston, Yates and Seneca Counties)**

The zone has many new members bringing our zone total to **69**! Our meeting attendance is averaging close to half. The new meeting location is *Steamboat Landing* in Canandaigua. Our last meeting was November 10, 2008 at 10am.

At our September meeting, Mary Younge RN, Monroe County Health Dept of Health, presented a dynamic talk on PPD skin testing and Tuberculosis. Nurses that were present received CDC certification. For further information, Mary can be reached at [myounge@monroecounty.gov](mailto:myounge@monroecounty.gov). or through the TB Control 1-585-752-5161. Winners of the Education Book raffle at the September

meeting were DeNoe Gibson, Cindy Meckley, JoAnn Salemi, Allison Wildey, and Kathy Termine. Congratulations to Helen Katt, Finger Lakes DDSO, was elected our Zone Representative!

*Edie Smith RN, Secretary*

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**In Memoriam-Joanne Mills RN**

A very special lady, Joanne Mills, died on May 28, 2008. Many, many years ago when our communication with fellow nurses in this field was via written letters (hand written snail mail) and telephone calls (land phones with cords) and most of us were the *only* nurse in our agencies, Joanne Mills an RN from Lifetime Assistance Inc. (LAI) saw the importance of networking. She organized nurses from the Upstate DDSO area by inviting them to lunches and informal meetings at LAI residences.

As our numbers increased Joanne was instrumental to gather MRDD nurses in Genesee NY and helped to formally organize the Western New York Community Nurses Association (WNYCNA). The membership list from 1986 included 45 nurses from 25 different agencies. This association later merged with the NYS MR/DD Nurses Association. As I was going through my archives of our Associations' papers, I found the write-up of Joanne's nomination for president of the WNYCNA in 1986. Her goals then were as straight forward as Joanne was during the 23 years that I had the privilege of knowing her. Joanne was convinced that nurses could share their expertise and broaden not only their own scope of knowledge but that of the medical community at large. She felt nurses were in a position to educate the public and improve the services of the individuals we serve. Joanne's vision remains timeless as does her memory. Joanne changed titles within her agency, as have many nurses who have been involved in this field for years, but she never lost her focus on education and nursing. Joanne remained positive in all the years I knew her about her job, her family and most especially the individuals she worked for. She was the essence of what a nurse in this field should strive to be. This very special lady, Joanne Mills, died on May 28, 2008. She was an RN.

*Kathleen Termine  
Developmental Disabilities Services Director  
Catholic Charities Community Services*

**NYS MR/DD Nurses Association**  
**PO Box 32**  
Hannawa Falls, NY 13647

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### **OMRDD Courses**

Check the OMRDD 17<sup>th</sup> Catalog of Training and Development for Sept 2008-March 2009 for training opportunities including MR/DD New RN Orientation, Telephone Triage, Diabetes Education T-T-T, Diabetes Updates, Insulin Injection Update, and Preventative Health Screening for People Aging with Intellectual and other Disabilities.

You can register online @ [www.omr.state.ny.us](http://www.omr.state.ny.us) or call (518) 473-1190 or Fax: (518)473-4490

### **Rehabilitation Research and Training Institute (RRTI)**

The RRTI continues its series of FREE course offerings. Topics include Aging and Developmental Disabilities, Assessment with Geriatric Individuals with DD, mental Health and Geriatric Individuals with DD and Health, Wellness and Environment for Individuals with DD. Interested nurses may attend one course or work toward certification in Geriatric/DD Nursing. You may register for courses @ [www.rrti.org](http://www.rrti.org). (A short pre-test is required as part of the registration process.)

**Websites** (Please share helpful website addresses with us.)

[www.mypillbox.org](http://www.mypillbox.org) Can create tailored med schedules complete with pictures of the meds. Check it out!  
[www.drugs.com](http://www.drugs.com) A great website for medication information. Med pictures including generics.