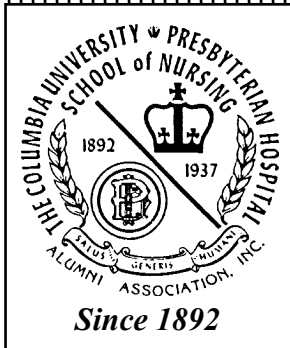


# The Alumni Newsletter

Columbia University-Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Association, Inc.

Volume 12 Issue 1

Spring 2008



*The Newsletter is published to bring together members of the Columbia University-Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing Alumni*

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**Use the Alumni home page to obtain information concerning:**

- profiles
- membership
- pensions
- sick benefits
- scholarships
- research awards
- news

## Margaret L. Fracaro, '70 Receives Award for Innovative Practice

**M**argaret L. FRACARO, '70, was recognized for excellence in nursing at an awards ceremony held at the College of Nursing, New York University on November 1, 2007. Fracaro received the Agnes and Rosemary Ludden Award for Innovative Practice at the college's Twentieth Annual Celebration of Nursing Excellence. She was recognized for creating new approaches to quality patient care, for evolving professional standards for nurses, and for promoting practice through nursing science. Employed at the

New York Presbyterian Hospital as the Patient Care Director for the Department of Epidemiology at both the Columbia and Cornell campuses, Fracaro's expertise in infection control makes her a valuable member of several hospital committees. She is a member of the Environment of Care Council, Clean Hospital Steering Committee and Water Safety Committee. Her expertise has been sought at the statewide level as well. She co-chairs the Infection Control Council of the New York – Presbyterian Healthcare System. Fracaro has developed creative ways to improve staff compliance with JCAHO infection control measures, which range from new policy on cleaning of instruments to a recent pilot project designed to improve hand-washing behavior in all levels of staff. Fracaro is a past president of the Alumni Association and remains an active member of our Board of Directors.



*Margaret L. Fracaro, '70 receiving the Agnes and Rosemary Ludden Award for Innovative Practice from Nancy Vazac Jackson, '70 at the NYU Twentieth Annual Celebration of Nursing Excellence.*

# MESSAGE from the PRESIDENT

Nancy VAZAC Jackson, '70, Ed.D, RN

Whenever I speak with Columbia Nursing Alumni, I am struck by the pride they express in having been the beneficiaries of such an extraordinary education. This seems to hold true whether they are still actively engaged in the profession of nursing or have moved on to some seemingly unrelated area of interest. At our annual reunions we often informally poll those attending and ask the typical questions: who traveled the furthest, who has the most grandchildren, and in what kind of nursing positions are alumni working. Often alumni will volunteer that they "left" nursing and now work in real estate, or office management, or law, but they almost always add, "I still use my nursing communication skills, interviewing skills and time management skills that I learned in nursing school. They have helped me succeed in my new field." It seems that the Columbia nursing education maintains its value over time.

Our annual reunion is a wonderful time to reminisce about just what was so special about those years. We have made a few changes for this year's April 25th event – a new "look" for our invitation, a new venue, and a slightly different format to give more time for the sharing of old memories. We will retain our custom of having a dynamic keynote speaker – this year former Board member Peggy McEvoy '60 will share her work with Women and AIDS in the Caribbean. As usual, we will have a major focus on our 50th Reunion class – but other reunion classes are gathering too. If you want to find out who from your class will be attending, or you want to urge your classmates to attend, you can contact our administrator Denise Ewing at 914-966-3699 or [cuphsonaa@aol.com](mailto:cuphsonaa@aol.com).

We are asking that reunion attendees bring along old photos and memorabilia from their years at nursing school. Our office has received a few calls about the nursing uniforms and black stockings in the current film "Atonement", which evoke memories of our old "probie" uniforms. Any photos of those? Bring them to reunion! We welcome all alumni to gather at our annual "reminiscathon."

Columbia University-Presbyterian Hospital  
School of Nursing Alumni Association, Inc.

*cordially invites you to join us*

*for our*

**115th ANNUAL MEETING & REUNION**

**on FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2008**

*at PRINCETON/COLUMBIA CLUB*

*15 West 43rd Street (Between 5th & 6th Avenues), New York, New York*

*Special Recognition to Classes ending in 3 and 8*

## Nursing Pins

Thank you to all the Alumni who sent us their nursing pins or let us know they would be willing to pass their pins along to nurses who have lost theirs. The recipients are so thankful. One alumnus wrote, "I cried when I received the package. I'm looking forward to writing to the donor to tell her about all the nursing adventures still in store for her pin."



*Please contact the Alumni Office if you would be willing to "recycle" your pin. (914) 966-3699.*

## Call for a New Editor

*By Debra R. Hanna, '81*

In May, 2008 when my term of service on the Board of Directors ends, I will also step down from my duties as editor of the *Alumni Newsletter* and the *Alumni Magazine*. For someone who wants to assist the good work accomplished by our alumni association and who likes to write, being the next editor might be just the right thing to do. If you are interested in this volunteer opportunity, contact Denise Ewing at the alumni association office by calling 914-966-3699 or by e-mailing Denise Ewing at [cuphsonaa@aol.com](mailto:cuphsonaa@aol.com)

# Alumni News

## 1931

**Elizabeth FAIRBANKS Blomberg**  
Redding, CA – “I celebrated my 98th birthday November 12, 2007.

**Irene GAEDKE Koehler** (submitted by her daughter, Edith Williams) “My mother loved her years at Columbia-Presbyterian especially attending with her cousin, Muriel ROSS Farley, '32. My mother recalls watching the George Washington Bridge being built from her dorm room window and admiring the construction techniques of the Empire State Building. She was concerned when “Typhoid Mary” was allowed to re-enter New York City.



After doing Public Health Nursing in the Catskills, she and Dad moved to Massachusetts where she became a school nurse. Mother then sold real estate for many years in Briarcliff Manor, NY. They retired in Frederick, MD. When my sister became ill and needed care, all my mother's nursing skills came back again and together we eased Chris' last weeks. At 95, my mother came to live with me in Illinois and she is now at a retirement home, and is ready to spend Christmas with three of her five grandchildren and four of her five great-grandchildren.

She will celebrate her 97th birthday in late December with all of them. She has lived a long and happy life, a busy life, much enhanced by her years at Columbia-Presbyterian. She speaks of it still. It is like yesterday in her mind.”

## 1942

**Martha PEARSON Freeman** “Another year draws to a close, a Christmas holiday season renews the need to rejoice and to again count one's many blessings. . . . I feel so much appreciation for what being a Columbia Presbyterian graduate means to me. I am so grateful that I chose nursing as a career and feel both blessed and proud to be a member of such an eminent and superior association.”

## 1943

**Marie WALL Fay** Vero Beach, FL – “Due to macular degeneration of our eyes, my husband and I moved to a retirement home in Vero Beach, FL. This is where we ought to be . . . . We even have a retired nurses club. It would be difficult to become a couch potato here. I am happy to report that our eyes have recovered . . . . We still wonder how long this [cure] will last. Time will tell. Happy New Year to all.”

## 1944

**Virginia SHATTUCK King** – “I have long since strayed from ‘nursing.’ Since we moved to Florida I have become involved in art, mostly watercolor. I have won many awards across the country for my watercolors. I am a signature member of the Georgia Watercolor Society, Southern Watercolor Society, Florida Watercolor Society,

and Brigantine Gallery in Cocoa Beach, Florida. I have been ‘Artist of the Month’ two times in the past year. I am second vice president of Eau Gallie Library and I am in charge of obtaining speakers for a variety of programs once a month. I have a new, beautiful great-granddaughter who lives with her parents in Seattle. My life is very full and busy. I am a member of the Cape Canaveral Branch of the National League of American Pen Women. [I ] have written two books, an autobiography and a family history. My oldest son died almost five years ago . . . . The other three are happily prosperous. I still keep in touch with several of my dear P.H. friends.”

**Virginia STANFORTH Stuart** writes, “I am now living in a comfortable retirement community in Lenox, MA after spending most of my life in Maine. I have a daughter nearby, which is why I am here. My other two children live in Maine and Vermont. I have been divorced for 34 years and have spent the times since in many types of nursing care - hospitals, private school, home healthcare, etc. Once a nurse, always a nurse. Nursing is very different today than it was in the 40's. As students we had to wear black shoes & stockings, a hair net & a uniform. That was in the 40's when WWII was going on. Many of our Graduate RN's were overseas so we students had big hospital chores. We had time off one weekend per month from Saturday noon till Sunday 1pm. We bonded together and survived well. I still connect with some of my classmates and we talk about “the good old days.”

**1945**

**Ruth HIRSCH Silverman** – “My husband and I moved to a wonderful retirement community, the Tamalpais, near our former home in 1998. Bill died of renal failure in December, 2004. I try to remain active. I am the 2007 Tamalpais Croquet Champion. I received my own mallet from my family on my 85th birthday. I play daily at 8am with five other ladies. I travel frequently to visit my youngest son and wife in Seattle, my daughter in Boston, and my eldest son and his wife in Wellfleet, on Cape Cod. My daughter will be remarrying in June, 2008 and I hope to attend the wedding in New Hampshire. My granddaughter, 25, has a great job as a communications director . . . in Washington, D.C. My grandson, 20, is a junior at Pratt Institute of Art in Brooklyn, NY, and he is a gifted painter.”

**Lillian E. TURNER** – “I retired after working as an RN from 1945-1976. I worked as a Certified Physician’s Assistant from 1976 until 1998. Retired again since that date and living with a niece and nephew in Ephrata, WA. I will be 90 years old next year, use a cane, hearing aids, and my vision is going south. Otherwise in reasonable health with the aches and pains that go with the age.”

**1948**

**Bernice MITTLACHER Rosenberger** – “No news is good news. We’re enjoying retirement and looking forward to 58 years of marriage in August, 2008.”

**Virginia WEIGEL Shaffer** – writes that she is now living in Whiting, NJ, that she has travelled to Germany and throughout most of the United States of America. During her career, she worked in Chicago, New York, New



Jersey. She took early retirement and continues to enjoy her life. She has joined the Red Cross and is currently involved with disaster shelters and emergency management. She has children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren in various states.

**1951**

**Zelpha CARD Hoyer** – writes that she and her fiancée have built a small retirement home, plan to travel to Plant City, Florida after Christmas, 2007, and are generally busy with house and garden projects. “Hopefully, our spring ‘Class of 1951’ reunion will happen in Florida . . . a few of us are still continuing our round robin letters first started in 1952.”

**Dawn NEWNHAM Teator** North Charleston, SC – “Have been a member of the original alumni association since graduation in 1951!!!”

**Isabel HOLT Dannenberg** – “Dick and I are doing fairly well in our senior years. I participate in the ‘Arthritis Warm Water Exercise’ class several times per week and also work with a rescue and adopt group, which has been quite active since Hurricane Katrina. I adopted ‘Jenny,’ a sweet beagle, and ‘Pirogue,’ a very appreciative

cat who was rescued from a rooftop by a helpful man in a ‘pirogue,’ thus we named the cat. Dick (82) volunteers for AARP/IRS tax preparation for the elderly, and he is also a part of the Emergency Response Communication Team. He stays busy. We both do. We have two grandsons who will be in college this fall. . . .our granddaughter is nine and . . . is an honors student and a cheerleader. I certainly enjoy keeping in touch with my classmates from ’51! Best wishes for the coming year!”

**1955**

**Betty LEE Kerr** – writes that she is retired and living in Florida. “Activities abound here, keeping us seniors active. Of course, the weather is always a plus. We are involved with Special Kids, Inc. Twice a year we provide an outdoor party for about 350 students with special needs, a Christmas Party and each April, a modified golf outing. We now have students from three counties and six schools participating. Time during the interim is used to raise funds, which allows us to provide this fun activity. Even those in wheelchairs come with their caregivers. Three of our sons and their families are still in Rochester, NY. The fourth son is in Bradenton, Florida. Activities are golf, bridge, Mahjong, sewing, computer, fun with neighbors and friends. Our hope is to stay healthy so that we can continue to be productive as we age.”

**1956**

**Dorothy VARNEY Cunningham** – writes that her daughter lives in Austin, Texas, and her son lives in Willcox, Arizona. She and her husband plan to celebrate their 50th Wedding anniversary in February, 2008.

**1957**

**Alida ISHAM Millham** Gilford, NH – “I am an elected member of the New Hampshire General Court House of Representatives, serving my fourth term. I serve on the Executive Department and Administration Committee and am the Chair to the Licensure Subcommittee. I was actively involved in the revision of the Nurse Practice Act in 2005. I retired in 1997 from the position of Executive Director of Community Health and Hospice of the Lake Region where I served for 15 years. I serve on a number of not-for-profit boards and am a director of the Healthy New Hampshire Foundation.”

**1960**

**Beverly PAUL Bailly** – writes that after graduation, she began her nursing career on Nantucket Island. Over the years she moved to Boston, France, Detroit, New York, Florida and finally, to San Diego. She sustained injuries in 1999 when a truck hit her car, and although she has had surgeries, she has not returned to work. She lives near her two children and five grandchildren and currently volunteers for a small hospital and hospice.

**1962**

**Morton (Mo) Ellen Young** – “I retired three years ago and have taken up modeling and acting – exciting and so much fun. I will be filming my third movie (made for TV and the internet) called “The Jury.” I’m in the first segment called “The Seer” and I play the judge. It should be out in March, 2008 or beyond. I’ve had a colorful and exciting nursing career and look forward to having more fun in acting.”

**1963**

**Katherine (Katy) FRITZ Goodwin** – writes that she finished a certified nurse midwife’s course at the University of California, San Francisco in 1980 and has since delivered more than 2000 babies. She has been married to Chuck since 1970 and they have two sons, Kyle and Sorrel, and two grandchildren. “Thank you School of Nursing for teaching me the basics! I am sorry I will not be able to be present for the 2008 reunion. I will be present in spirit!”

**Suzanne AMSTER Harris** – “I retired from nursing in 2006 after a wonderful, diverse career including teaching, home health care and medical review. This past June my husband decided to close the door on our own business of thirty years and retire. We had become tired of living in the heart of Phoenix, Arizona. The city had grown and air pollution was becoming a problem. We sold our home, packed up and moved to Durang, Colorado, a dream we had for over twenty years. We now live in a log home on 35 acres with views of the La Plata Mountains. It is wonderful! We are actively pursuing our sports of skiing, hiking and cowboy action shooting. I have been the Senior World Champion four times. Our son is married, lives in San Francisco and is expecting his first child in May, 2008. I will be a new grandmother. Our daughter lives on the north coast of Oregon.”

**1964**

**Diane RANKIN Behrens** Columbia City, Indiana – writes that she and her husband have four children, two sons-in-law, one daughter-in-law, and 12 grandchildren. All live nearby. She is active in her church, serves as a deacon, is president of the Women’s



Association, and is a Pioneer Guide. She is also a docent at the Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo and is on the board of Cedars Hope, which provides housing for women with chronic mental illness, as well as The Lighthouse, which provides temporary housing for homeless families. She is a reviewer for Continuing Education Programs for the Indiana State Nurses Association and is currently helping a friend with the publication of a medical and surgical textbook.

**Mary BEACH Ellis** – reports she has been married for 41 years, and spent twenty years overseas in Tanzania, Uganda, Indonesia, Sumatra, England, Chile, and Liberia. She and her husband have three adult children and three grandchildren. Although now retired, they built and funded an orphanage in Tanzania. The website is [www.mufundiorphans.com](http://www.mufundiorphans.com). They will travel there in 2008 with potential donors and the new board president. She will stay an extra month to visit her daughter and granddaughter. She is very interested in energy based healing strategies and has become a certified Healing Touch practitioner. She would like to know of others pursuing energy medicine interests ([maryindia@aol.com](mailto:maryindia@aol.com)).

**1966**

**Carolyn SYWAK Bilton** – reports that she is a holistic advanced practice nurse in East Brunswick, NJ. She sees clients for pain, stress management, Reiki therapy, reflexology, cognitive behavioral therapy, relaxation strategies, guided meditation, and imagery. She has two-year old twin grandsons, and she lives near the ocean. “P.S. I wear my Columbia Presbyterian Nursing pin on my lab coat daily and get many compliments.”

**1972**

**Donna HOLCOMBE Baumgartner** – writes that she works two evenings each week at an assisted living facility, volunteers at a cat sanctuary and in the Medical Reserve Corps, and that she is active in the Herb Society of America. Her husband recently retired, they have four adult children and two of their children were married in 2007. All four children are employed: Erik is a financial advisor trainee, Christina is a registered nurse, Megan is an administrator for alumni events and college affairs, and Allen is an editor.

**1973**

**Sandra FURKA Kremer** – reports that she is married with three adult children, Tom, Pam, and Richie. She has worked in medical-surgical nursing, same day surgery, long term care, home care, adult day care and for the past twelve years has worked as a school nurse. “I have loved every job that I have had. Columbia prepared me in so many ways to work in such diverse areas.

**1974**

**Margo PAYNE Leithead** – “Just had a 16th grandchild. Miss teaching very much!”

**In Memoriam**

<b>Roberta (Bobbi) WILLIAMSON Kennedy '34</b>	February, 2007
<b>Ruth EPHRAIMSON Nelson '40</b>	October 7, 2007
<b>Ethel RYAN Long '43</b>	February, 2007
<b>Jean MAHONEY Balassone '53</b>	January 29, 2008
<b>Elizabeth LOEB '62</b>	January 4, 2008
<b>Mary BARNETT Starr '68</b>	November 7 2007

**Ruth EPHRAIMSON Nelson '40** Elizabeth Nelson wrote, “I am sorry to inform you that Ruth Ephraimson Nelson died on October 7, 2007.”

**Ethel RYAN Long '43** -- Her daughter Judie Apicella Champie wrote: “mother, Ethel Long, was one of three Columbia Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing grads who lived at Terwilliger in Portland, Oregon. Sadly, mother and **Roberta (Bobbi) WILLIAMSON Kennedy '34**, one of the other grads who lived at Terwilliger, died within days of each other in February, 2007. Ethel was always proud of her education at Columbia University Presbyterian Hospital. She was amazed at the new advances in medicine. Some of her training allowed her to view ‘new’ techniques of treatment and diagnostics by outstanding physicians. Imagine her delight to see those physicians names used for techniques in use today! Congestive heart failure very quickly ended Ethel’s life. She was 86 years young.”

**Jean MAHONEY Balassone '53** passed away January 29, 2008. She was a nursing instructor at CUPH, Vassar Brothers Hospital, and Dutchess Community Hospital in Poughkeepsie. She retired in 1985. She was married to Anthony Balassone in 1957. He predeceased her in 2000.

**Elizabeth LOEB '62** died on January 4, 2008. “The Department of Medicine and the division of Endocrinology of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University deeply regret the passing of Betsy Loeb, beloved sister of our esteemed faculty member, Professor John N. Loeb and daughter of the late Chair of the Department, Professor Robert F. Loeb. Betsy Loeb was a consummate nurse clinician whose professional skills and human kindness surpassed all standards of excellence.”

**Mary BARNETT Starr '68** – “Beloved wife, mother, sister, daughter, child of God, died Thursday, November 7, 2007, at her home in Devon, PA from pancreatic cancer. She was 60. Born in New York City, NY to Arthur and Elizabeth Barnett, she was raised in Kenya, Congo, and Tanzania. She attended Wheaton College in Illinois and Columbia University in New York. In 1969 she married Robert M. Starr. A gifted educator and compassionate and skilled nurse, she taught nursing students for over 20 years, most recently as a faculty member at West Chester University. She is survived by her husband, Robert, three children, Adam, Geoffrey, and Whitney, her father and her brother William Barnett. A memorial service was held Friday, November 16, 2007 at Wayne Presbyterian Church in Wayne, PA.

**Columbia University-Presbyterian Hospital  
School of Nursing Alumni Association, Inc.**

6 Xavier Drive, Room 314, Yonkers, NY 10704-1309

**WE'D LIKE TO KNOW**

We would appreciate information concerning your professional and/or personal life for our files and for publication in the Alumni Magazine. Please mail or e-mail a current photograph. Our e-mail address is: cuphsonaa@aol.com

Current Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name at Graduation \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Husband's/Wife's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Indicate whether Dr./Mr./The Rev., etc.)

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Number) (Street)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(City) (State) (Zip) Check here if new

Current Employer \_\_\_\_\_  
(Position) (Institution) (City) (State) (Zip)

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

We invite you to become a member of the Alumni Association: \_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00 Enclosed.

**PERSONAL NEWS: Weddings, births, adoptions, community activities, news of your family**

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**PROFESSIONAL NEWS: Promotions, appointments, papers published or delivered, new ideas implemented**

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# A Few Choice Words: On Economy

By Debra R. Hanna, '81

***Extravagance is, under all circumstances, to be deplored, but in the hospital where money is given with the expectation that it is to be utilized to the fullest extent for the benefit of the sick, and in homes where the necessary expenses of illness are sorely felt, it is a crime.***

Excerpt quoted from: *Practical Nursing: A Textbook for Nurses*, p. 11, Written by Anna C. Maxwell and Amy E. Pope, Published in 1907, by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York

Anna C. Maxwell did not mince words. Given her view of judicious use of money contributed by benefactors, one wonders how to think about money contributed to hospitals and other health care organizations today. Contributions are made to advance health care in several ways. Some individuals contribute money to provide care for people who are unable to pay their own bills. These heroes are usually anonymous donors whose pooled contributions pay bills that some people can't manage given the high cost of care. Our alumni are in this category of pooled donors helping their neighbors pay bills that are beyond limited retirement incomes. It seems that this collective work of our Alumni Association would give Anna C. Maxwell a great deal of comfort.

Some contributions come from private foundations in the form of grants for research that will improve care. Grant money is not easy to obtain, and it is frequently given more generously to physicians than to nurse investigators. Yet, we have many illustrious nurse scholars among our alumni who have obtained federal and foundation funding for research that has helped to improve health care, particularly nursing care. Each year our Alumni Association allocates a portion of its funds for research studies to be conducted by CUPHSONAA graduates. The applications for research proposals are accepted each March and awards of funds are made at the annual reunion meeting.

Every now and then, grateful patients write a statement into their last will and testament to leave portions of their estates to the hospital or the people who provided care when they were ill. Our Association has also been a recipient of such generous funds. We put those gifts to good use by helping our alumni who are in need and by providing scholarships for nursing students.



Anna Maxwell - 1910

Our Association carefully weighs and considers all the requests it receives. When applicants do not meet requirements for funds, but the need is urgent, we seek ways to make funds available so that no alumnus in need would ever be turned away. In keeping with the spirit of common sense and charity that we were taught, we have been prudent, yet generous in giving the money we've received to those for whom 'the necessary expense of illness is sorely felt.' The spirit that animated Anna C. Maxwell to write her thoughts about how contributions of money should be used continues to guide the Alumni Association. We hope we will continue in perpetuity the work of Anna C. Maxwell's goodness imbued with her same spirit of joyful charity and ineffable wisdom.

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