

# attractions

**Angela Strausser, R.N.**  
enhances the  
image of nursing  
on pages 4 and 5.  
Learn how you can, too.







# The Image of Nursing

It's reflected in everything we do

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## OUR MAGNET STORY

*Magnet hospitals are so named because of their ability to attract and retain the best professional nurses. "Magnet Attractions" profiles our story at Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network and shows how our clinical staff truly magnifies excellence.*

Ask the average person to describe a nurse and you're likely to get a variety of views. Descriptions will range from "Nurse Ratchet" ("One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest") to "Abby Lockhart" ("ER"). Many people's images of nurses are formed by what they see on television and in movies—that is, until they have an opportunity to experience real nursing care firsthand.

We've been talking a lot lately about the forces of magnetism. In the last issue of *Magnet Attractions* we shared how our many research opportunities make us Magnet by helping us grow professionally while improving care for our patients. In this issue we'll explore another force, the image of nursing, and the role each of us plays in how it evolves. The many ways we touch people every day, in the hospital and the community, continually formulate and perpetuate the image of our profession.

Nurses probably are known best for providing comfort. But we also know the science necessary to pick up on subtle changes in a patient's condition, and have critical thinking skills to manage a patient's pain and technical knowledge to administer treatment protocols. Our vast repertoire of capabilities has made us an integral member of the health care team.

But don't just take our word for it. Physicians themselves have said they see us as essential colleagues. This collegial image of nurses was heartily endorsed in our recent physician satisfaction survey, which you can read about on page 3. Scores consistently above the national benchmark show physicians' respect for our nurses' professional skill and competence in a culture of mutual respect and collaboration.

The spectrum of nursing responsibility was also apparent at the recent Friends of Nursing awards gala. We heard 43 separate stories of technical excellence, teamwork and extraordinary compassion. Denise Bodish learned how deeply you can touch people, and how that compassion stays with them forever. You can read her story on page 6.

A previous recipient, Angie Strausser, recounts on page 4 the value of teamwork among colleagues as we experience great triumphs and great tragedies. Nurses share the most intimate of relationships with patients and families, giving them value and dignity even in times of sadness and death.

The stories we hear every year at the Gala and on every unit, every day ARE the image of nursing. The stories of how we have touched patients and how they have touched us are what keep them alive in our hearts, and inspire us to keep doing what we do.

Our stories also help others see us as professionals with a depth of knowledge and skill who will also comfort people through a crisis. Check out 2004 Medallion Speaker Bernice Buresh's tips on how to tell our stories on page 5. We have an opportunity to share our legacy with everyone we meet, wherever we go. So next time someone asks what you do, tell them the full story!

*Terry A. Capuano*

Terry A. Capuano, R.N.  
Senior Vice President, Clinical Services



# Crystal Clear Respect



"Please listen to our nurses. They know as much about diabetes as many physicians." That's what **Larry Merkle, M.D.** (center, bottom row) often says about the clinicians he works with, including (clockwise from upper left) **Ann Marie Matus, R.N.**, **Amelia Amorim**, technical partner, **Susan Reiger, R.N.**, **Deb Swavely**, administrator, institute for vascular medicine, and **Deb Feden, C.R.N.P.**

**That's the image LVHHN's physicians have of our nurses, and Larry Merkle, M.D., exemplifies it**

## *Want an enduring image of respect?*

Picture this: Deb Feden, R.N., then a patient care coordinator on nephrology, is on the phone coordinating a patient's test. Meanwhile, endocrinologist Larry Merkle, M.D., wants to talk about another patient's blood-sugar levels. Instead of interrupting, Merkle waits until Feden is finished to ask his question.

"Between working at his practice, rounding at the hospital and seeing patients in the endocrine clinic, Dr. Merkle is always so busy, and yet he takes the time to wait for me," says Feden, now a C.R.N.P. in Lehigh Valley Physicians Practice. "That's how much respect he has for me and all nurses."

That trickles down throughout the 1,200-member LVHHN medical staff. In a recent satisfaction survey, physicians gave rave reviews and outstanding scores to LVHHN nurses. In particular, scores for nurses' level of professional skill, competence and respect for the medical staff were among the top five and far better than average scores at hospitals nationwide.

What creates that mutual respect? "The ability to listen," says Merkle. "It's not about me going to a patient, writing orders and making decisions on my own. It's about talking to the nurse, who is with that patient every day and knows what that patient goes through far better than I."

Take, for example, a patient with diabetes who isn't responding to a particular insulin therapy. Merkle will talk to that patient's nurse, and the two will discuss what might work best—maybe increasing the dosage or using a longer-lasting insulin. "That dialogue helps us find the right treatment and ensures we're also communicating that information to the patient."

Merkle, winner of this year's Friends of Nursing physician award, prides himself on never forgetting a face or a name. He treats everyone the same—with a friendly hello, a warm handshake and a conversation. "He gets to know a patient before he discusses test results," Feden says. "And when he's rounding with nurses or students and we're in a patient room, he makes sure everyone has a chair so we're all comfortable."

Merkle's respect creates great patient outcomes and gives nurses pride and confidence. Feden benefited from Merkle's guidance as she worked toward being a C.R.N.P. "He gave me the OK to manage patients, was with me during clinical study hours and helped me with every aspect of care," she says. "He's a true role model."

Kyle Hardner



# Sharing Triumph and

**A young man's death reminds me of life's fragility and the importance of sharing my profession**

I don't know what he looked like, but I will always remember the 18-year-old man who came to the trauma neuro ICU about a year ago. His car fell on top of him while he was working underneath it and crushed his face so badly his features were unrecognizable.

Our team worked quickly and diligently to resuscitate him. I could hear one nurse giving an assessment of his injuries: "severe head injury with excessive swelling." The wounds on his face were so bad we couldn't remove the bandages on his head, which had swollen to twice its normal size. We squeezed fluids into his IV to try to raise his blood pressure. His prognosis was poor. No matter what we did, what technology or skill we applied, he would never survive.

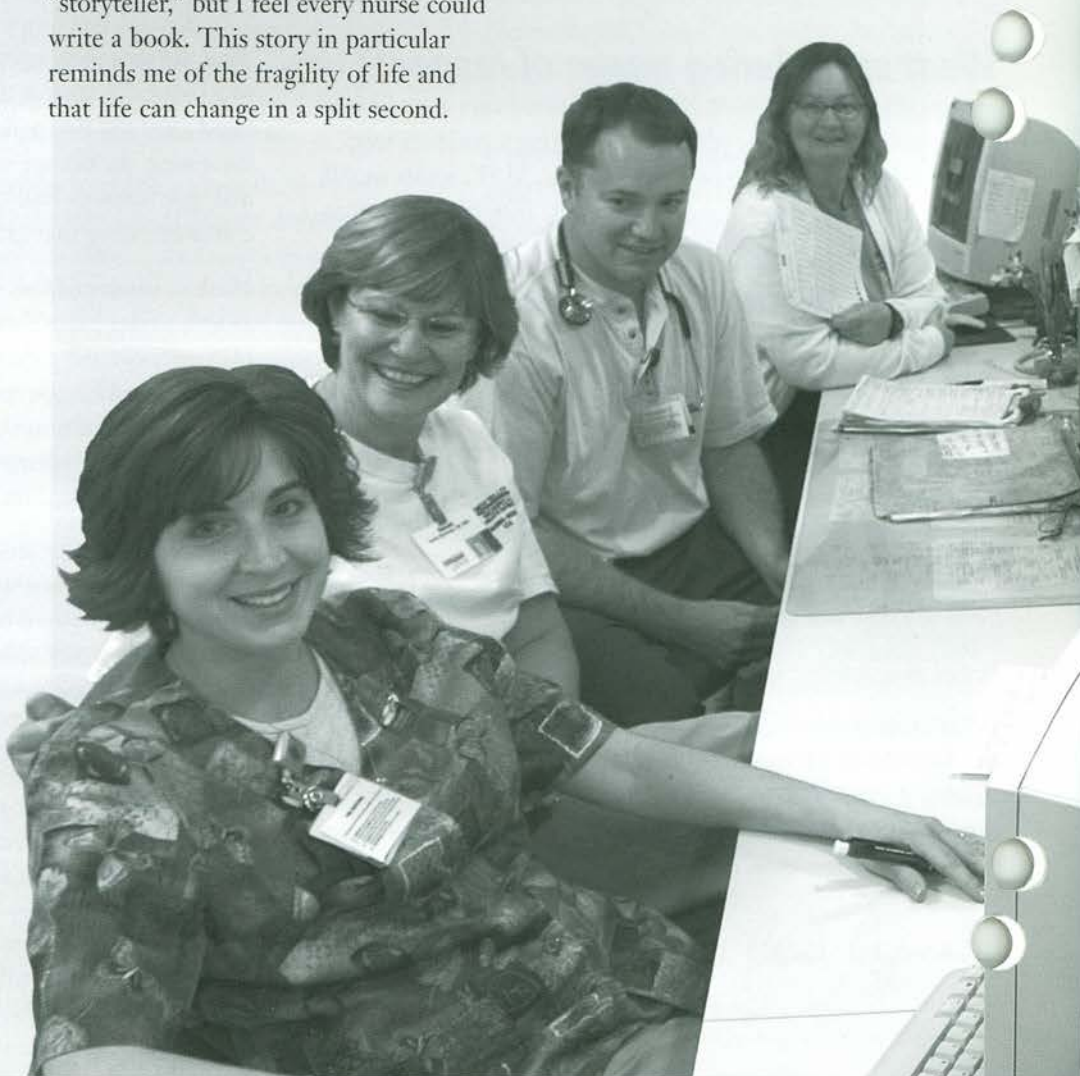
His mother, comforted by a nurse, watched our efforts. Her eyes were filled with shock and disbelief. After consulting the doctor, his parents agreed no one should take any heroic measures to save his life. We continued our futile efforts as his parents held his hands. When his heart stopped, everyone was in tears.

In our unit we share triumphs and tragedies. This day was a tragedy. But, as nurses, these experiences help us discover the support we have for each other and how valuable teamwork is. Afterward, our team talked about what happened and agreed we did the best we could in this tragic situation. He died with dignity, and his family was given

much needed emotional and spiritual support. I have so much admiration for my colleagues, and I feel privileged to work with them.

I feel as nurses we have a special job. We are at the bedside during these extremely private and personal moments. We remember our patients, because in some way they have touched us and left their mark. My colleagues call me a "storyteller," but I feel every nurse could write a book. This story in particular reminds me of the fragility of life and that life can change in a split second.

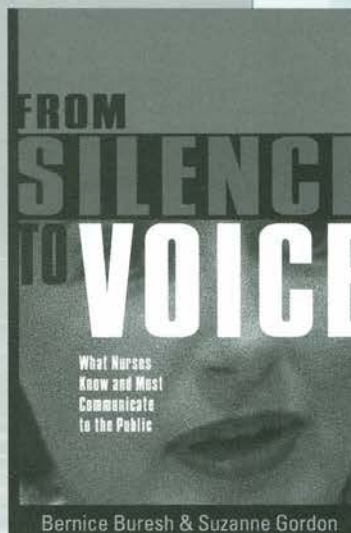
It's important for us to be storytellers, because it helps us accept our good and bad days. It is our way to "vent," whether we're happy about the outcome or shocked by it. Also, sharing our stories is important for our public image. Some people don't know what nurses do. It's important that we tell them.





# d Tragedy

Angela Strausser's TNICU colleagues say she tells stories about her patients that inspire. Eager to hear another story from **Strausser, R.N.** (far left), recipient of the 2003 Friends of Nursing Trauma Nursing Award, are: (left to right) **Sue McCauley, R.N.**, **Joe Groller**, respiratory therapist, **Tracey Gallagher, R.N.**, **Matt Karpowicz, R.N.**, **Lynette Yoder, R.N.**, **Stacy Michalik, R.N.**, **Renee Grow, R.N.**, and **Christy Herrmann, R.N.**



## LET'S TALK ABOUT ME

*YOU'RE A GREAT NURSE,  
SO TELL THE WORLD  
ABOUT IT*

When someone asks, "What do you do?" don't just answer, "I'm a nurse," says 2004 Medallion Speaker Bernice Buresh, co-author of *From Silence to Voice: What Nurses Know and Must Communicate to the Public*. Rather, she says, tell them the area in which you specialize and share a story about your work.

"People think highly of nurses, but we need to emphasize the intelligence, education, judgment, maturity, experience and compassion it takes to be a nurse," Buresh says. "Even holding a patient's hand is skilled nursing."

Buresh offers these storytelling tips:


- Think of three memorable stories to share with your family, friends and colleagues, and volunteer to speak to community and school groups and nursing students.
- Paint a picture of your work, using details that show what you do is consequential to the patient's care. Avoid using medical jargon or alphabet soup (acronyms).
- Relay facts to enhance the severity of a situation.
- Submit your stories to LVHNN's book that will chronicle the character of nurses. Tell us about your most inspirational day as a nurse, the patient who changed your life or nursing moments that are forever etched in your mind. Mail or e-mail your stories to Barbara Versage, R.N., Center for Professional Excellence.
- Share story ideas with the marketing and public affairs department for possible publication in LVHNN's magazines. Call or e-mail Pamela Maurer, 610-402-0818.
- Work with public affairs to get nurses media coverage. To write a letter to the editor, opinion-editorial or be a media source, call or e-mail Brian Downs, 610-402-0825.

*Sally Gilotti*



# Twice as Nice

**Two-time Friends of Nursing award winner spent her first reward on education to become an R.N.—but her stories of compassion were always there**



**Denise Bodish** was two days shy of her 19th birthday when she began working as an L.P.N. in psychiatry at LVH—17th and Chew. Within the first week her eyes widened to the challenges she would face in her 25-year career as she cared for a severely depressed woman whose son had jumped off a bridge to his death.

The woman was hysterical, burdened with extreme guilt. But she soon warmed to Bodish, who was the same age as her late son. “Most of the time I would just sit with her and listen,” Bodish says in her soft, soothing voice.

A few years later they were reunited. “I was at the mall and she called out my name and gave me a hug,” she says, smiling. “You never get over the loss of a son, but I was glad to see her doing better.”

Bodish’s colleagues in adolescent psychiatry at LVH—Muhlenberg say she still treats her patients with the same optimism and grace, earning her the 2004 Friends of Nursing Psychiatric Nursing Award. They tell a story about a depressed young boy, who didn’t have decent clothing to wear to his placement interview. So Bodish brought a preppy blue blazer and khaki pants from home

for the boy to wear. “It’s not so much for the interview, but for his self-esteem,” she says, humbly. “We do similar things for many children.”

Bodish’s dedication also earned her the Friends of Nursing Helen Potts L.P.N. Award in 1987. It inspired her to become an R.N., she says. So she invested her \$500 award into education, and spent five years taking classes during the day and working nights—all while raising twins. In 1994, she earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing. “I was determined that this is what I wanted,” Bodish says. A year ago, she became a patient care coordinator.

In a department where sadness is prevalent, Bodish finds motivation in the smiles of her patients, the “thank yous” and letters of appreciation they send. She has passed on her enthusiasm to her colleagues.

The calendar that hangs on the wall above Bodish’s desk is marked with each colleague’s birthday—reminders of the days she will bake them a cake or cupcakes. “I also try to say ‘thank you’ whenever I can,” she says.

Sally Gilotti



**Reflections of friends** - As she looks in the mirror, Denise Bodish's stories and the stories of her colleagues reflect the image of nursing. Counterclockwise in mirror: **Wendy Hoppel** received flowers from her colleagues in celebration of her Award for Excellence as a Mental Health Technician; **Lillian Walton**, administrative partner for behavioral health, opted to be with her "real-life friends" rather than watch the last episode of "Friends;" **Georgette Beckett** (seated left) was surrounded by her mother, **Elsie Beckett** (seated right), and siblings (standing, left to right) **Stephanie Quilo**, **Edward Beckett** and **Rose Marie DeHaven**, as she received the Medical Staff Support Partner Award. On page 6: TOHU team members **Vicki McIntosh**, administrative partner (back left), **Tim Wolf**, technical partner (back right), **Beata Wirth**, R.N. (front left), and **Deb Williston**, nurse practitioner (front right), cheer on their colleagues; clinical services senior vice president **Terry Capuano**, R.N., and president and CEO **Elliot Sussman**, M.D., share stories at LVHNN's "Central Perk."





# Snapshots of Nursing



**Mark Gutekunst enhances the image of nursing by touching people every day in the hospital and community**

As a teen-ager, Mark Gutekunst's favorite television show was "Emergency." So when his best friend asked him to help on the local emergency medical technicians' (EMT) squad, he did. In the 18 years since, he's moved full speed ahead to care for patients as an EMT and an emergency department (ED) R.N. Now the vital community services he provides have been recognized by the Bethlehem Area Jaycees, which named him Outstanding Young Health Care Professional for 2003. It is through the efforts of Gutekunst and his fellow nurses that LVHHN is able to fulfill its mission of service to the community.



- 1 Gutekunst takes care into the community by teaching CPR and advanced cardiac life support at the George E. Moerkirk, M.D., Emergency Medicine Institute. The father of two young children involved in sports, Gutekunst advocates CPR training for everyone, since you never know when you might need it.
- 2 Mark inherited a sense of community service from his father, who died in 1981. When he received the Jaycee's award, Mark learned his father was a Bath Area Jaycees Man of the Year in the 1960s, commended for starting a Little League in Bath.
- 3 The Jaycees honored Gutekunst in part for his work on MI Alert, a program that opens a heart attack patient's blockage within 90 minutes (the LVH team's average is 12 minutes less; their record is 51 minutes). "It runs like a pit crew," he says. "We bring the ED and cardiac catheterization lab together to make the transition smoother and ease a patient's fears. If my mom was having chest pains, I would take her there." Gutekunst presents a poster on the MI Alert program at local, regional and national conferences.
- 4 Gutekunst enjoys the fast pace of the LVH – Muhlenberg ED, where he's worked since 1999. "Years ago, nurses primarily offered comfort," he says. "Today we still provide comfort and are essential members of the team, with a high degree of technical knowledge. We are the eyes and ears of the patient."
- 5 Gutekunst satisfies his need for speed as a firefighter at Nazareth Speedway. The race-track is a lot like the emergency department – fast-paced, stimulating, always changing, never boring.

*Erin Alderfer*



## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE MODEL

# C O M M I T T E E *Updates*

## Get Involved!

The 2004-2005 council and committee book is available through your unit director. By joining LVHNN's councils and committees you can have your voice heard and enhance the profession. The booklet explores all the different councils and committees available. Join a committee by signing the appropriate page within the booklet or council and feel the "magnetic" pull.

### LEGISLATIVE

The Legislative Committee has a new look. Besides legislative activities, the committee now focuses on advocacy issues. The committee assures all LVHNN staff are aware of issues that pertain to the nursing image.

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The committee is looking for volunteers to staff the first aid trailer at Bethlehem's annual Celtic Fest. The festival will be held Sept. 24, 25 and 26. Anyone willing to volunteer, call Barbara Versage at 610-402-1789.

### COLLABORATIVE NURSE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Research Day is planned for Oct. 4. The focus this year is on sharing and applying research findings. Flyers providing more information will be distributed over the summer months. Anyone interested in sharing their research should contact Barbara Versage at 610-402-1789.

## PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### PUBLICATIONS

**Terry Capuano, Joni Bokovoy, Deb Halkins, and Kim Hitchings**, *Work Flow Analysis: Eliminating Non-Value-Added Work*, *Journal of Nursing Administration*, May 2004.

### ORAL PRESENTATIONS

**Patricia Matula**, *Cardiac/Vascular Nurse Certification Course*; Society for Vascular Nursing 2004 Convention, Albuquerque, N.M., April 2004.

**LuAnne Procyk**, *Speech Mapping During Awake Craniotomy for Brain Tumor Resection: The Role of the Neuroscience Nurse*; American Association of Neuroscience Nurses Conference, San Antonio, Texas, April 2004.

**Carol Torchen and Anne Panik**, *Prepared for Bioterrorism ... And We Got SARS!*; American Organization of Nursing Executives 2004 Annual Meeting, Phoenix, Ariz., April 2004.



### POSTER PRESENTATIONS

**Janice Barber** and **Linda Geraci**, *Music as a Nursing Intervention to Decrease Anxiety*; International Society of Psychiatric Nurses Association, St. Louis, Mo., April 2004.

**Terry Capuano**, *Succession Planning ... Developing Leadership Potential*; American Organization of Nursing Executives 2004 Annual Meeting, Phoenix, Ariz., April 2004.

**William Leiner** and **Gwen Kutzner**, *Communication Innovations on an Inpatient Behavioral Health Department*; International Society of Psychiatric Nurses Association, St. Louis, Mo., April 2004.

**Robert Lichtstein**, *Utilization of Airway Pressure Release Ventilation in the Burn Population*; American Burn Association Conference, Vancouver, British Columbia, April 2004.

**Rochelle Schell** and **James Kocis**, *A Magnet Model for Shared Governance on an Inpatient Oncology Unit*; Oncology Nursing Society 2004 Congress, Anaheim, Calif., April 2004.

**Carol Sorrentino** and **Karen Peterson**, *Overwhelming Affect and Impulsivity: Teaching Self-Management Strategies*; International Society of Psychiatric Nurses Association, St. Louis, Mo., April 2004.

**Tami Lee**, *Understanding of Discharge Instructions After Vascular Surgery: An Observational Study*; Society for Vascular Nursing 2004 Convention, Albuquerque, N.M., April 2004.

**Lucy Cascioli**, *Transitions: How to Meet the Educational Staff Needs*; National Teaching Institute and Critical Care Exposition, Orlando, Fla., May 2004.

**Robyn Collins**, **Marilyn Leshko**, **Lisa March** and **Lisa Snyder**, *Implementing FISH in Critical Care*; National Teaching Institute and Critical Care Exposition, Orlando, Fla., May 2004.

**Kathryn Fromholz** and **Donna Barnes**, *Do Patients Benefit From the Use of Autotransfusion Devices Post Total Joint Replacement?*; National Association of Orthopaedic Nurses 2004 Congress, Nashville, Tenn., May 2004.

**Marie Porter**, *Score Card: Integrating Cost, Quality and Satisfaction Measures in the GI Lab*; Society of Gastroenterology, Dallas, Texas, May 2004.

**Eileen Sacco**, **Tracy Silfies**, **Cheryl Tyler** and **Lois Guerra**, *Introducing Orthopaedic Nurses to the Bare Bones of Research*; National Association of Orthopaedic Nurses 2004 Congress, Nashville, Tenn., May 2004.