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The Flame 2014-15 Issue

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Faculty member Dave Jansen, right, talked with Assistant Professor Ed Reitz about the MCN M.E.N. (Men are Excellent Nurses) Group he created.
Help us write our history

Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN) became Illinois State University’s sixth academic college on July 1, 1999. The rich heritage of MCN began in 1919. For 96 years the primary mission has been to prepare professional nurses by providing excellence in nursing education. This mission continues with incredible success through our talented administration, faculty, staff, students and friends. MCN creates a dynamic community of learning to develop exceptionally well-prepared nurses who will improve health outcomes locally and globally. Excellence in teaching, research, service, and practice with a focus on the vulnerable and underserved is promoted. Our flame does indeed continue to burn brighter and brighter.

A 100-year celebration of the founding of Mennonite Hospital School of Nursing, now Mennonite College of Nursing at ISU, is being planned for 2019. The college has gone through many changes. MCN has been and continues to be a very special place to so many people. As part of this celebration, a history book of 100 years of stories will be written. We would like to hear from you about what you think should be included. The 100-Year History Book committee, including the author, will make final decisions regarding inclusions, but we need you to provide the direction and suggestions. To assist you in submitting your stories and/or photos please see a survey form on page 23. Please complete the survey and return it with attachments and/or photos by September 15. Electronic and online submissions are also an option. Thank you.

Message from the interim dean

Greetings alumni and friends!

The 2014-15 academic year has been very exciting, challenging and full of changes at Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN). As many of you know, last July I was appointed as the acting dean of MCN, while Dean Janet Krejci served as interim provost. This past March Dean Krejci was named Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. We miss her daily presence at Edwards Hall, however, she will always have a special place in this college and her leadership and passion for nursing will continue. I am the interim dean for MCN, and a national search for a dean will take place this fall.

Our students continue to excel with the NCLEX pass rate – for 2014, MCN students had a 94 percent pass rate. The state average is 84 percent and the national average is 82 percent.

The renovations of Edwards Hall have been completed and the Office of Student and Faculty Services has moved back from Uptown Crossing. It is wonderful to have the faculty and staff back in the same building!

We are already planning for our 100th anniversary in 2019, and I'm thrilled to have Gail Lamb and Mary Ann Watkins working directly with author Susan Blystone for the development of the MCN 100 Year History Book, the sequel to the previous two history books. This book, yet to be titled, will document the history from 1999 through 2019, and focus on a collection of stories for the past 100 years of this beloved college. But we need YOUR help! Please see page 23 and complete the survey (it is also available online) to help with this very important project. We are also working with April Anderson, university archivist, who is cataloging every piece of historical information about Mennonite College/College of Nursing. If anyone has any MHSN/MCN historical items to donate to the University Archives, please contact my office at (309) 438-2176.

It is such an honor for me to serve as interim dean for this amazing college, and I want to thank everyone for their continued support. This college is very special, and as we continue to grow we will carry on our mission of promoting excellence in teaching, research, service, and practice with a focus on the vulnerable and underserved.

Please enjoy this issue of The Flame!

H. Catherine Miller, Ed.D., RN, CNE
Interim Dean
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Illinois State’s online nursing program ranked in U.S. News and World Report

By Molly Hartrup

Illinois State University’s online nursing program is ranked as one of the Best Online Nursing Programs in U.S. News & World Report.

We are pleased to be recognized nationally for our online Nursing Systems Administration Program,” said Mennonite College of Nursing Interim Dean H. Catherine Miller. “We have outstanding faculty members who are experts in online teaching, and we have a commitment to prepare outstanding nurses to lead in an era of growth and change.”

The online nursing program is ranked 93rd on the list, and is the only public institution in Illinois to be ranked. This is the first time Illinois State has been ranked in the survey. U.S. News defines a nursing-distance education program as a program for which all required nonclinical courses can be completed via distance-education courses that incorporate Internet-based learning technologies.

Schools were ranked in five general categories, including student engagement, faculty credentials and training, peer reputation, student services and technology, and admissions selectivity. Other considerations included graduation rate, class size, tenure faculty and student debt.
Celebrating men in nursing

New group for male nurses forms at MCN

Instructional Assistant Professor Dave Jansen spearheaded a new group at Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN), the “MCN M.E.N. Group.” M.E.N. is an acronym to impress that MCN Men are Excellent Nurses. Men are a minority in nursing, representing only 7 to 10 percent, depending on where you live in the U.S. In other countries, such as Saudi Arabia, as many as 30 percent of nurses are men. “As a male in the nursing profession, I wanted to put together a group that included students, alumni, and faculty that would address what it means to be a man in a profession where the majority is women,” Jansen said.

The group meets once a month during the fall and spring semesters and has been a positive opportunity for social networking. MCN M.E.N. explores the history of men in nursing, and it invokes discussion about clinical and social issues men encounter as a minority in the profession. The group provides an open discussion of shared experiences plus nursing students’ thoughts of how they see men in nursing now and in the future. The group also participated in a teleconference with Patrick Hickey, an author and professor at the University of South Carolina School of Nursing. Jansen already has plans for the coming academic year, including an invitation to female nursing students and faculty to attend a meeting and talk about their perspective on men in nursing, connecting with male nurses who are national leaders, setting up a teleconference with male alumni from MCN as well as other schools, and creating a monthly blog.

“I encourage male MCN students and alumni to join us and participate in this endeavor,” Jansen said. An average of 11 participate each month and 20 students attended at least one meeting last year. Men who are practicing nurses or would like to become a nurse are welcome. The following are highlights of stories that have been published for the MCN E-newsletter. To read the full articles, visit Nursing.IllinoisState.edu/About/PR.php.

Honors Program prepares nursing student for job market

By Jennifer Beemer

Garrett Sawyer ’14 came to Illinois State with a sibling advantage. Based on his older brother’s experiences as a Redbird, Sawyer decided he wanted to pursue a career in nursing.

“I knew I wanted to go to Illinois State because there were great benefits to being in the Honors Program. Immediately there were scheduling benefits, but I also received several scholarships because of the Honors Program throughout my college career,” said Sawyer, who majored in nursing. “The greatest benefit I received from the Honors Program was it allowed me to complete independent research.”

With the aid of Mennonite College of Nursing Professor Susan Kossman, Sawyer explored the evolution from paper charting to electronic systems. He created a survey and analyzed the responses. Sawyer served as coordinator and communicator between the hospital and the University.

“It was a lot of work, and doing all of that work would not have been possible without the stipend that I got through the Honors Program for undergraduate research,” Sawyer said. The effort resulted in Sawyer attending a Midwesten Nursing Research Conference. He was one of two undergraduates chosen to present.

“The research I conducted really showed me that I would be capable of going on to pursue more education. I don’t think I would have had that realization without the Honors Program making it possible.”

Now ready to enter the job market as a registered nurse, Sawyer credits the Honors Program experience and his stellar nursing classes for his confidence.

“Progressively throughout the different semesters students get more and more independent. The nursing program prepared us really well for getting our licenses, working as a nurse, and how nursing really works.”

Andrew Sepiol earned a degree in kinesiology with a specialty in exercise science at Northern Illinois University (NIU) in 2010. After graduation he worked as a coach specializing in general sports conditioning, and functional training. “I decided to pursue nursing because during my tenure as a coach I found that I genuinely enjoyed helping people and tracking their improvements as I worked with them,” he said. “I have found nursing is slightly different, but I still get that fuzzy feeling when I’m able to make a difference in someone’s life.”

After talking with some of his friends who are nurses and graduates of the Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN), he decided to look into his options, and learned about the accelerated B.S.N. “I chose MCN primarily because of the glowing recommendation I received from my friend who graduated from the program,” he said. “It also happens to be quite affordable, and I have found that the college has a very positive reputation with everyone I have encountered.”

Soon after being accepted into MCN, Sepiol learned about the Illinois State University Triathlon Club, the Tri Birds. This club was established in 2002 for anyone who is looking for a unique challenge in the multi-sport lifestyle.

“Endurance sports, such as the triathlon, have become my favorite, despite it being the easiest painful event I have ever completed. They are designed to give the glory to the individual that has put in the most work, and has the gall to suffer the most.”

So, how did Sepiol balance being a triathlete as well as being a student in the intense 15-month accelerated program? “I worried most about how to balance training and school. Out of all of the sports I have competed in, the triathlon is the hardest, but also my favorite,” he said. “It is my main outlet for stress, and frustration.”

After the first few weeks in the program, Sepiol was able to find a balance at roughly 10–20 hours per week for training. His previous training schedule included 30 hours of sport-specific training in the three disciplines, as well as strength, flexibility, and physiotherapy to prevent injuries. Sepiol found that the reduction in training volume created additional stress, in an already stressful program. “My ultimate goal is to compete professionally, and that would entail roughly 40–45 hours of sport-specific training per week,” he said. “Right now with going back to school, I spend 10–20 hours on training and 10–20 hours on schoolwork every week. I had to craft some new solutions to make all this work, such as recording lectures to listen to while biking or running, I somehow manage to fit eating, sleep, class, clinical, study, commute, and homework around my workouts. You can pursue other passions you have while going to school; you just have to be dedicated and know how to balance your schedule.”

Sepiol would like to find a job where his schedule consists of three 12-hour shifts so he can continue to train as a triathlete. “When thinking about my future, I wanted a job where I could somehow manage to fit eating, sleep, class, clinical, study, commute, and homework around my workouts. You can pursue other passions you have while going to school; you just have to be dedicated and know how to balance your schedule.”

A passion for service: From the military to nursing

Matt Baxter’s dream of receiving his B.S.N. came true as he celebrated graduating from Illinois State University’s Menno- minite College of Nursing (MCN) in August 2014.

Prior to attending Illinois State, Baxter attended Western Illinois University and earned a bachelor’s degree in law enforcement and justice administration. He initially wanted a career with the military and as a police officer, but after fighting a battle with a life-threatening illness, he changed his career path to nursing. After high school, Baxter enlisted in the Illinois Army National Guard and was trained as a military police officer. He served from November 2000 through November 2009 in the 333rd Military Police Company out of Freeport, Ill. He was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in April 2003. After 13 months he returned home with his unit.

When he decided to pursue a career in nursing, one of the biggest influences in his decision was his experience as a cancer patient. “I was initially diagnosed in July 2006, and it is strongly believed that I got sick from serving in Iraq,” he said. “My unit deployed to Afghanistan in October 2006, but I was unable to go because I was in the hospital for three months battling a severe relapse of the cancer that nearly took my life. I was able to receive my treatment and to manage to return to my unit in early 2009 and achieve the rank of staff sergeant before receiving an honorable discharge.”

His time in Iraq helped him cultivate a strong mentality about never quitting and never accepting defeat. “I acknowledge that there are just some things in life that we don’t have any control over, yet I have never allowed myself to be
anything but driven and dedicated to succeed and live the life that I know I am still capable of living.”

Baxter is passionate about helping others in need and selfless service. His first experiences with helping those in need came during his nine years of service in the Illinois Army National Guard. Prior to deploying to Iraq in 2003 with his military police unit, Baxter volunteered to receive additional medical training and serve as his unit’s Combat Lifesaver (CLS) and supplement their platoon’s combat medic. “As a CLS I was equipped to provide care to the wounded, injured, and sick until they were able to get to more definitive care. It was a honor being able to provide this additional support to those I served with.”

Many years later Baxter decided to pursue a license as an emergency medical technician. “I have worked on a volunteer ambulance service for over three years now, and have really enjoyed caring for people in a pre-hospital setting in an emergency medical services role.”

After his deployment to Iraq, Baxter decided it was time to begin college and the Navy ROTC program at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. “I choose to get my degree from Mennonite College of Nursing because I knew was what I wanted. Since my acceptance into the program, I have been very impressed with everything that this nursing school has to offer.”

When asked what his plans were after graduation, Baxter said he had family and friends in the Chicago area. “Being near them would be important to me. I really want to begin my nursing career in an Emergency Department.”

“My experiences in the Army and also as an EMT have made me capable of remaining calm and performing effectively under extremely stressful events.”

Accelerated B.S.N. student prepares for Navy deployment

Justin Johnson knew from the time he was a sophomore in high school that he wanted to be an officer in the U.S. Navy. So when the time came to begin college, he found the Navy ROTC program at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. “Happy to hear that the program accepted all areas of study, he pursued a major in healthcare while signing on for the Navy’s ’08 Silver Fox.”

His first ship was based in Pascagoula, Miss., and then Mayport, Fla. He completed one deployment with the Counter-Narcotics Trafficking (CNT) Operations, where he and his fellow officers searched for people smuggling drugs in the Caribbean Sea and the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

On his second ship he had the opportunity to provide humanitarian support to victims of Hurricane Felix in Nicaragua in September 2007. The following month he was on the first ship to deploy the V-22 Osprey, a military, tilt-rotor aircraft, to Iraq to participate in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

As his time in the Navy was coming to an end, he thought about pursuing a career in healthcare and decided nursing would allow him to focus on holistic, preventative medicine. He read about the Mennonite College of Nursing, the Nursing Simulation Lab, the NCLEX success rate and comments from students and alumni “made my decision quite simple,” he said.

He started the Accelerated B.S.N. program in May 2014, one of 19 students in this second-degree, 15-month program. As a member of the Navy Reserves he knew deployment was always a possibility. During his first 12-week summer semester he took 18 nursing credits. On August 7, after his last semester final, he got a call telling him he would be deployed in October.

“Justin’s B.S.N. education is interrupted but not over,” said Dianne Clemens, assistant dean for MCN’s undergraduate program. “MCN administration has assured Justin there is a ‘seat’ saved for him whenever his tour is completed.”

Johnson is a lieutenant with 9 1/2 years of active duty and 9 years of commissioned service. His unit has supported the Navy’s partnerships with European military, assisting with coordinating joint port visits for U.S. warships and training between U.S. and European navies. He was recently selected for promotion to lieutenant commander.

“I know there are many opportunities available to the B.S.N. prepared nurse,” Johnson said. “He’s interested in working in intensive care but also learning about other areas. He also encourages students to serve in the military while attending college.”

“The military can give great experiences and be an excellent career enhancer,” he said. “I have traveled to many places, worked with people from all walks of life, and developed skills that will prove to be extremely helpful in my civilian career. It can definitely be time consuming when trying to complete an education but many people choose to work while attending school so I always describe the Navy as my part-time job.”

The military can also help financially, he added, with tuition assistance and scholarships.

Visit Nursing.IllinoisState.edu/StudentLife/Scholarships.php to watch the video about Binder’s story.
Mennonite nurses alumni organization (MNAO) awards

Distinguished Alumni Award

Vickie Gasche Lannie graduated from Mennonite School of Nursing in 1965 and began her long and impressive nursing career at Mennonite Hospital as a student. She took special interest in dying patients. Her concern for their care led to a long-term study of death and dying through observation and education. In 1965 she attended a workshop on the subject and met Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, known as a pioneer in death and dying as well as hospice care in the United States. This grew Lannie’s passion and led to a Syear independent study with Dr. Kubler-Ross in her Chicago-area home. Her study was as much as she could learn and what she learned could help to provide the kind of care they needed at the end of their lives.

After studying the hospice movement, Lannie was inspired to bring the same philosophy of care to Illinois. In 1971, she was employed at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center and worked with staff to put that philosophy into practice. This led to her serving as coordinator of the Community Consortium on Hospice, which included clergy, medical personnel and social workers working together to plan a hospice program in central Illinois. Although well represented within the medical community, the consortium was met with quite a bit of skepticism and difficulty. At that time the medical community was based solely on the art of healing and curing and in that definition there was no room for the care of dying patients to home their own skills. She spent 35 years comforting more than 9,000 families in the Peoria area and helped bring hospice care to thousands more. In 2000, Lannie was recognized as one of the 25 Women in Leadership for her hospice work. Her care for those who need it most is exemplary and her dedication has greatly influenced central Illinois.

“Behind every dripping IV, hissing oxygen, intubation tube or surgical incision lie human beings with stories,” said Lannie. “She explains how their needs are simple: Look at ME, touch ME, smile at ME, and know ME. She recommends taking just a minute to let people tell their stories. It may be their last chance to tell it, leaving their legacy. ‘My experience as a Mennonite student nurse included the teaching and skills to look past all else to see the patient, to listen in reverence to their story,” she said. “I am grateful for that kind of humane compassionate training from the best school and the most amazing Drs. I have ever and always. I am both humbled and honored to receive this award and do so because of all the nursing leaders on whose shoulders I have stood for the last 50 years.”

Early Career Achievement Award

Lauren Park Nelson graduated cum laude from Illinois State University’s Mennonite College of Nursing with her B.S.N. in 2006. She went on to earn her M.S. as an adult nurse practitioner from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2010. After graduating from MCN, Nelson began her career at the Mayo Clinic Hospital. St. Mary’s campus in Rochester, Minn., caring for a variety of post-operative patients. While she was going to graduate school, she was an RN at the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics in Madison, and was also a teaching assistant at the School of Nursing. Nelson is a nurse practitioner at Fairview Geriatric Services in Edina, Minn. Working as a nurse practitioner, she explored her passion for nursing and focused her interests on geriatric care. She began working at a senior living/advanced memory care center in Minnesota caring for over 100 patients. Nelson continues to provide dedicated care to the geriatric population throughout the metropolitan area.

Nelson volunteers for a local food pantry, and the Minnesota Twins First Aid Team. She also recently traveled to rural India with a team of fellow healthcare professionals to volunteer in village clinics. In her experience she calls challenging, eye-opening, and one of the most important achievements of her life.

At MCN, Nelson was in the Honors Program, was a Collegiate International Scholars Laureate (she traveled to Taiwan to learn about nursing) and a scholarship recipient of the Lattau Sloan Endowed Scholarship. She is a certified adult nurse practitioner and is a member of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. Nelson’s advice to students is to take advantage of as many opportunities as possible. Her transcultural experience to Easbourne, England, gave her the chance to see first-hand the differences between socialized and privatized health care. Here, she found nursing clinicals at a long-term care facility made her consider a career in geriatrics.

Working on research with Professor Caroline Mallory made her carefully consider the goal of planning a hospice program in central Illinois. Although well represented within the medical community, the consortium was met with quite a bit of skepticism and difficulty. At that time the medical community was based solely on the art of healing and curing and in that definition there was no room for the care of dying patients to home their own skills. She spent 35 years comforting more than 9,000 families in the Peoria area and helped bring hospice care to thousands more. In 2000, Lannie was recognized as one of the 25 Women in Leadership for her hospice work. Her care for those who need it most is exemplary and her dedication has greatly influenced central Illinois.

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Service Award

University President Emeritus David Strand began his career at Illinois State University in 1978, serving as vice president for business and finance as well as vice president and provost and executive officer prior to becoming president in 1995. Of his many accomplishments, the most influential to Mennonite College of Nursing was his transfer to ISU.

He recognized the great potential in adding MCN to the university’s colleges and saw the mutual benefit that had previously been overlooked.

In 1999, MCN was able to expand its presence during a severe nursing shortage with 181 undergraduate students and 49 graduate students. The college needed a financially stable and supportive home while Illinois State gained a college renowned for producing graduates who are exceptional clinicians and tireless advocates for their patients. With dramatic changes on the horizon for healthcare, this merger proved constructive for all involved – thanks to his efforts.

Since its arrival, MCN has grown in numbers and programs. In 2015, the undergraduate program has 983 students enrolled across the traditional and accelerated B.S.N. programs as well as the online RN-B.S.N. The graduate program has 123 students enrolled across the family nurse practitioner and online nursing systems administration programs and the Ph.D. in nursing and doctor of nursing practice programs. The nearly 100-year-old reputation has continued to flourish as the college’s alumni put their outstanding training into practice across the state and nation.

MCN is grateful for all of the support and dedication Strand has shown for the college. Our vision to be a premier college of nursing dedicated to improving local and global health outcome will continue thanks to his service.

“I am honored and humbled by this recognition, especially since Mennonite College of Nursing has distinguished itself in so many ways following the transition, and become such a great asset to Illinois State University,” he said. “Numerous constituents, including the citizens of Illinois and the nursing profession, have benefited from this partnership.”

Spirit of Nursing Award

Two alumnae received the 2013 MNAO Spirit of Nursing Award – Delores Miller Carter ’60 and Diane Binder Johner ’74.

Delores Miller Carter graduated from Mennonite School of Nursing in 1960 and began her 43-year nursing career. She spent 42 of those years working at Mennonite/Brokaw Hospitals. As a nurse, her passion and dedication shone brightly every day and the care she gave to hundreds of patients made an impact that still resonates years later.

Throughout her career, she worked nights in the hospital setting in medical-surgical, ortho-pediatric, rehabilitation, hospice, urology, and gynecological units, displaying extraordinary diversity, resourcefulness, and strength. She also adapted to many dramatic changes in healthcare technology. Committed to staying abreast, Carter continued to provide the best care possible to her patients and shared her wisdom with those who worked with her.

Carter continuously inspired and shared her faith and kindness with those around her. Her commitment and inspirational care is a true embodiment of the spirit of nursing.

“Entering Mennonite Hospital School of Nursing in the fall of 1957 was one of the best decisions of my life,” said Carter. “Little did I know it would be a career that would last a lifetime, and I am humbled by this award and share it with all who have RN after their name.”

Diane Binder Johner graduated from Mennonite School of Nursing in 1974. She serves as a health facilities surveillance nurse with the Illinois Department of Public Health surveying long-term Care facilities in the Champaign region of Illinois.

She served for 20 years at the Macon County Health Department as director of Health Promotion and public relations coordinator. During her time as a public health nurse, she was actively involved in promoting health throughout the county and her accomplishments have greatly influenced many lives.

Johner facilitated the formation of one of the first active Safe Kids Coalition in Illinois, and served as chairperson for the annual Safe Kids Day for over a decade hosting up to 15,000 kids and parents with the help of 150 volunteers each year.

The purpose of the event was to prevent unintentional injuries, the number one killer of kids. For several years she chaired Project ReLEAF, a grass-roots committee that promoted a community-wide educational program encouraging residents to members of the community “choose not to burn” leaf litter. The project focused on the health hazards of leaf burning and in 2000 Decatur voted to ban leaf burning. She facilitated the Macon County Smoke-Free Restaurant Recognition Program promoting smoke-free restaurants prior to the state law.

Johner has sought to serve the vulnerable throughout her career. She implemented the Macon County Prostate and Testicular Cancer Screening Program reaching underserved and underinsured men in Macon County. She was presented the Legislative Award by State Representative in recognition for her efforts to create legislation for men’s health to mirror the breast and cervical cancer program for women.

Johner is passionate about nursing students. She served as a nursing instructor at Richland Community College, Milikken University, Illinois and her alma mater Mennonite College of Nursing, where she served as adjunct faculty since 2000. She believes in and empowers each student and works tirelessly to provide them with new experiences.

“The Spirit of Nursing is doing what you love and loving what you do and enjoying every minute of it!” said Johner.
Milestone Class Reunions

60th Reunion
Front row, from left: Viola Kinne Huber, Shirley Fasking Jackson, Barbara Atkins Dalonson, Marileen Glenn Williams. Back row, from left: Doris Schrier Haas, Mitzi Simmons Car, Helen Wiseburn DeHekman

50th Reunion
Front row, from left: Marilyn Bachman Litwiller, Sharon Irion Schertz, Vickie Gasche Lannie. Back row, from left: Lynne Beutel Romyn, Mary Kuenzi Calhoun, Marilyn Sancken Hasty, Donna Baughman Leonard, Cindy Roth, Christine Leman Klopfenstein and Dotti Baer Ulrich

40th Reunion
Front row: Janice Mangan Parker, Vickie Keene Butler, Denise Brubeck Mears, Linda Westfall, Janette Frahm Toliver

20th Reunion
Sue Collins Albee Grant

MCN Nurses Week
MCN Nurses Week was celebrated April 21-25. The faculty and staff potluck, a new event, kicked off the celebration. The Student Nurses Association held their Candlelighting Ceremony on April 23, and Vickie Gasche Lannie ’65 was the keynote speaker. Lannie also received the Mennonite Nurses Alumni Organization (MNAO) Distinguished Alumni Award, the highest award presented to an alum, at the MNAO Awards and Reunion Banquet.

The Golden Jubilee celebration was held April 24, honoring alumni who graduated 50 or more years ago. Interim Dean H. Catherine Miller and MNAO President Jennifer Patton recognized the Class of 1965, and special 50-year pins were handed out. The final event was the MNAO Awards and Reunion Banquet. Five awards were presented and milestone reunion classes were recognized: Distinguished Alumni Award—Vickie Gasche Lannie ’65; Early Career Achievement Award—Lauren Park Nelson, B.S.N. ’06; Service Award—David Strand; and Spirit of Nursing Award—Delores Miller Carter ’60 and Diane Binder Johner ’74.

Plans have already been made for MCN Nurses Week for 2016! See the calendar of events on page 19.
Breastfeeding expert keynote speaker for McDowell Stafford Lecture

Diane Spatz, Ph.D., RN-BC, FAAN, was the keynote speaker for the McDowell Stafford Lectureship Series in Child and Family Health, and provided educational and community presentations on April 30 at Illinois State University.

Spatz is a professor of perinatal nursing, the Helen M. Shearer Professor of Nutrition, and faculty advisor to students at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. She is director of the lactation program and a nurse researcher at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). She also serves as faculty for the Sigma Theta Tau and the Johnson & Johnson Maternal Child Leadership Academy.

Spatz is an internationally renowned clinical nurse scientist who has translated the science of human milk and breastfeeding worldwide. At CHOP, she developed the breastfeeding resource nurse program to better educate and train nurses to provide the most current and evidence-based care to families. For the educational presentation, she spoke on “Translating the Science of Human Milk and Breastfeeding Into Clinical Practice.” This continuing nursing education activity was approved by the Ohio Nurses Association and the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.

“Breastfeeding is a Public Health Issue—Solutions for Improving Breastfeeding in the United States” was the topic of the community presentation. She talked about how the “mommy wars” undermine the health of our nation. A reception followed.

These events were sponsored by the Marion McDowell Stafford Lectureship Series Fund, Harold K. Sage Foundation Fund, and Illinois State University Foundation.

Student and faculty honors and awards

The following awards were presented at the Commencement Ceremony in December 2014

Dr. Herman Tiedeman Memorial Award
Temidayo Ademokoya
Senior Excellence Award
Kate Alleavitch
Geriatric Excellence Award
Kayla Kollog
Alumni Award for Clinical Excellence Award
Temidayo Ademokoya
Kathleen A. Hogan Teaching Excellence Award
Instructional Assistant Professor Dianne Clemens

The following awards were presented at the Commencement Ceremony in May 2015

Dr. Herman Tiedeman Memorial Award
Paige Suva
Senior Excellence Award
Kaitlyn Ventura
Geriatric Nursing Excellence Award
Kaitlyn Tykal
Outstanding Graduate Student Achievement Award
Lindsay Otter
Alumni Award for Clinical Excellence
Jessica Carroll
Kathleen A. Hogan Teaching Excellence Award
Associate Professor Susan Kreisman
Graduate Program Teaching Excellence Award
Professor Denise Wilson

2015-16 SNA Officers: Marnie Johnson (treasurer), Spencer Simpson (president), Nicole Norris (vice president), and Beca Harris (secretary)

SNA President Spencer Simpson talks about what it is like being a nursing student—visit IllinoisState.edu/Nursing to see her video
2014–2015 graduates

December 2014
Baccalaureate Degree
Ademokoya, Temidayo
Allenwich, Kate
Allen, Michelle
Barla, Nikki
Barnes, Mary
Bergamanni, Lauren
Bess, Megan
Bethast, Morgan
Bowden, Stacy
Braun, Olivia
Bursdall, James
Burns, Kaitlyn
Burk, Michael
Cielocha, Lauren
Clutteur, Darrin
Cielocha, Lauren
Correll, Samantha
Decros, Brittaney
Diamante, Rumer
Dirksen, Krista
Diamante, Rumer
D'Acquisto, Nicole
Deedrich, Megan
DeBatty, Bonnie
D'Acquisto, Nicole
Curley, Michelle
Curley, Michelle
Curley, Michelle
Curley, Michelle
D'Aquisto, Nicole
D'Aquisto, Nicole
Dickman, Amanda
Dolezal, Lindsey
Eaton, Colleen
Eckmeyer, Macee
Gallagher, Nichole
George, Lauren
Hanley, Lisa
Hanley, Allison
Henderson-Connolly, Anastasia
Hettling, Jaclyn
Hoban, Carly
Hoelsa, Allison
Hornby, Kristen
Izquierdo, Theresa
Jacobs, Alyssa
Johnson, Stephanie
Jones, Valerte
Kalupski, Britanny
Keith, Kaithlin
Kenny, Erin
Knobloch, Wyant
Kois, Margaret
Kooistra, Carrie
Koszewski, Marissa
Kraemer, Jessica
Kreisman, Jamie
Kuhlmann, Allison
Laurie, Andrea
Lindgreen, Krista
Loge, Sara
Lubera, Kaylie
Lucas, Hayley
Malone, Christine
McNaugh, Andy
McNulty, Amanda
Mendoza, Alberto
Miller, Ashley
Miller, Madisen
Morgan, Christina
Morga, Lindsay
Musial, Kelsey
Nischbach, Nicole
Olly, Samantha
Paghuca, Nicholas
Pastwa, Michelle
Pendola, Ashlee
Peir, Paule (Nico)
Pett, Carley
Pull, Angel
Roberts, Mary
Shaak, Sarah
Shimon, Brooke
Smith, Ashley
Smith, Kristen
Smith, Shannon
Soja, Elycia
Suva, Paige
Thuilen, Brooklynn
Thomas, Emily
Tyrak, Kaitlyn
Ventura, Kaitlyn
Wetzel, Ellen
Winies, Lauren
Wigfall, Janay
Woire, Jennifer
Yuhla, Lindsey
Galey, Diana
Gonzalez, Miranda
Hubbert (Ghrist), Aubrie
Irl, Jennifer
Jarvis, Ellyn
King, Angela
Oblen, Amy
Otero (Hodge), Lindsay
Parke, Karina
Sanderad, Angela
Tharp, Andrew
Thorne (Braithre), Lyndsey
Tracy, Angela
Trost (Shaller), Robin
Wilson (Smith), Maureen
Family Nurse Practitioner Certificate
Hudgins, Rachael
Nursing Systems Administration
Ewing, Kathleen
August 2015
Baccalaureate Degree
Bell, Theresa
Boser, Alison
Brown, Adam
Cannon, Toma
Cloud, Natalie
Del Greco, Phoebe
Espinosa, Sarah
Foley, Maureen
Fusinito, Alyssa
Goranson, Haley
Hand (Kappp), Lindsey
Hlavache, Joseph
Jones, Brandi
Kenyon, Bearnard
Krise-Evans, Kelly
Kusturn, Joy
Larkin, Anna
Lesnik, Hayley
O'Brien, Alex
O'Malley, Mackenzie
Perrin, Julia
Quadrave, Sana
Ruff, Lindsey
Simon, Kanes
Sziklany, Kelly
Torello, Katie
Wils, Bunny
Yee, Kevin
Family Nurse Practitioner Certificate
Alexander, Laura
Ariega, Tasha
Baxter, Delaine
Bodner, Beth
Bruckl, Jessica
Egleston, Monika
Gennicks, Keith
Henderson, Lindsay
Kraft "Lesemann", Danndyln
Latona, Michelle
Miller, Gregory
Montalvo, Florece
Redman, Echo
Sampson, John
Schmuck, Kristina
Sedlock (Tahly), Rebecca
Strong, Kristin
Tordoff, Steven
Underhill, Emily
Wicklein, Marianne
Wontyniek, Jolene

December 2014 graduation reception

May 2015 BSN graduates

May 2015 MSN graduates
Associate Professor Susan Kossman retires after 22 years

After 22 years of teaching at Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN), Associate Professor Susan Kossman retired in May. Kossman and her family moved from Texas to the Bloomington/Normal area in 1993. Over the years, she has taught almost all of the programs offered at MCN, including the traditional B.S.N., accelerated B.S.N., online RN-B.S.N., M.S.N and Ph.D. Her research interests included nursing and consumer informatics and simulation in nursing education.

When asked what her favorite memory was while at MCN, Kossman replied, “There are so many and they all revolve around our students and graduates. I love running into them out in the community and especially love when my family or I am receiving care from them—it is very comforting and I know we’re getting excellent care. When my husband had a heart attack years ago, our grads took care of him in the Emergency Department, cath lab and critical care unit – I was so relieved! When my granddaughter was born three years ago, Lynn Kennell’s clinical group took care of her and my daughter, and Candy said she learned more from them than from the staff nurses! And it’s really great to see former B.S.N. students finish their graduate degrees and come back to teach with us.”

Being one of the many beloved faculty members, other faculty and students wanted to give Kossman a proper sendoff… and organized a flash mob in Edwards Hall. Assistant Professor Charlene Aaron recruited faculty, staff and students to participate, and worked with Kossman’s family to make sure she would be there. As the Kossman family walked down to the first floor of Edwards Hall, everyone was in their hiding places – wearing their ISU/MCN red and when the music started they really surprised her. “I can’t believe so many students, faculty and staff took part in this… and managed to keep it a secret!” said Kossman.

Her plans after retirement include becoming a master naturalist and volunteering in local parks doing conservation and wildlife work, volunteering at the free clinic and learning to play the accordion. She also would like to work more in her garden and with her crafts, and of course being a fantastic GiGi to her grandchildren.

“It was a wonderful 22 years with my MCN family—and while I’m retired, I’m not gone. I hope we all stay in touch!”

Visit Nursing.IllinoisState.edu/About/PR.php to watch the flash mob video.

Nursing alum hiking in Nepal when earthquake struck

By Ryan Denham

An Illinois State nursing alum who was hiking in Nepal in when the earthquake struck on April 25 has returned safely to the U.S. and she’s urging Americans to support relief efforts.

Caitlin Bull ’12 and her small hiking team were on an 80-mile, 13-day round trip to Mount Everest Base Camp—a dream come true for this world traveler. The quake hit while the Mennonite College of Nursing grad was on a steep hill near Tengboche, Nepal, forcing her to grab a tree to brace herself.

“At first it was interesting but as it shook harder and lasted over a minute, tree branches were falling all around and we heard landslides across the valley and I felt my eyes widen in concern,” she said. “As an adrenaline seeker, I never want to seek out earthquakes. It’s a very helpless and powerless feeling.”

Bull wasn’t injured, but her Nepali guide and porter both lost their homes. The death toll from the 7.8-magnitude earthquake is at 5,800 and rising, with 600,000 homes destroyed or damaged.

Bull and her friend, Ashleigh Stumler from North Carolina, saw the increasing extent of the damage as they moved toward a larger village. Once there, they had Internet access and told their families they were safe. (Stumler and her family were featured in an ABC News story about their reconnection.)

“People around the world have awful drinking water, but Wi-Fi is everywhere,” she said. Bull and Stumler kept moving, eventually arriving in the Himalayan nation’s capital, Kathmandu. She saw huge cracks in the roads, demolished buildings, and tent cities. Bull, who works around the U.S. as a traveling emergency room nurse, volunteered at a hospital before tourists were told to go to their embassies.

“Compared to the happy bustling place I witnessed prior to my trek, the city felt like a sad ghost town with far less activity,” Bull told STATEside in an email. Bull flew back to the U.S. and arrived in Washington State. “My thoughts go to the people in Nepal who are sleeping on the cold, wet ground with limited and increasingly scarce resources,” Bull said. “These people have not hesitated to risk and give their lives for trekkers and mountaineers from our country and others. I hope that we do not hesitate to give aid now that they are in a time of desperation and need.”

The room Bull stayed in on her way up to Everest Base Camp
Alumni Notes

The following notes are from May 2014 – April 2015

1992
Ronna Pierce Buck works at the LaSalle County Health Department with the Women, Infants and Children program (WIC). Buck has been with WIC since 1992, and MCN students come for the community health rotation. She said it is a great honor for her to work with these students.

2006
Jennifer Stouffer received her M.S.N. from St. Francis Medical Center College of Nursing and completed the Clinical Nurse Specialist program in family-child nursing. She is a patient care manager for the Pediatric Intermediate Unit at OSF St. Francis Medical Center. She is part-time clinical faculty at MCN for pediatric clinicals.

2011
Jana Benjey moved to Texas and works private duty pediatric home health, and was accepted into the FNP program at Texas A&M Corpus Christi.

Kelli Neargarder Dietrich works as the clinical lead at OSF Medical Group—Critical Care, Pulmonary and Sleep Medicine in Bloomington.

Molly Giertz Ford was accepted into the FNP program at Texas State University.

2012
Jessica Muller is an RN at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

2013
Amelia Bunton Clark got married last December and works at Meadow Lakes in Mooresville, Ind.

Maggie Tonkin works in the nursery at Memorial Medical Center in Springfield.

Stephanie Zietala accepted a position at Weiss Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

2014
Kelsey Schluntz accepted a position at Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital in Barrington as a surgical nurse.

Nicole Zayner accepted a position as a NICU nurse at Advocate Illinois Masonic Hospital in Chicago.

2015
Jana Benjey moved to Texas and works private duty pediatric home health, and was accepted into the FNP program at Texas A&M Corpus Christi.

In memory...

Our sympathies go to the family and friends of the following:

1943 Myrna Slagell Park – March 19, 2015
1944 Thelma McAnelly Singley – July 29, 2014
1947 Mary Porzelius Augspurger – November 28, 2014
1949 Shirley Dehm Peeken – December 23, 2014
1952 Carolyn Sommer Zehr – July 27, 2014
1953 Alice Gerber Jiles – March 12, 2014
1958 Joan Stoller Gaston – October 15, 2014
1959 Sandra Williams Smith – November 30, 2014
1975 Judith Giller Walsh – October 7, 2014
1991 Stacy Ledbetter – October 29, 2014
2010 Emily Fredbloom – September 19, 2014

Calendar of events–save the date!

**Summer 2015**
- August 7: MCN Summer Graduation Celebration

**Fall 2015**
- September 17: Scholarship Banquet
- October 3: Family Day
- October 23: Alumni Day
- October 24: Homecoming
- December 1: MCN Holiday celebration

**Spring 2016**
- April 19-23: MCN Nurses Week
- April 19: Potluck and Candlelighting Ceremony
- April 21: Alumni/Student Networking Social
- April 22: Golden Jubilee Celebration
- April 23: MNAO Awards and Reunion Banquet
- May 6: MCN Commencement Ceremony

For more information about MCN events, visit Nursing.IllinoisState.edu.

View more photos on the MCN Flickr account! Nursing.IllinoisState.edu and scroll down to the bottom and click the Flickr button.
2014-2015 event highlights

Faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends participated in several events throughout the year. Below are some highlights.

PROUD Summer Camp 2014

SNA collected donations for the Community Health Care Clinic

A chilly, but fun Homecoming tailgate

Student Nurses Political Action Day in Springfield

Alumni/Student Mix and Mentor in Downers Grove

Proud Summer Camp 2014

Alumni Day 2014

All ages attend the MCN Homecoming social

Xi Pi Spring Induction Ceremony

ROTC Military Ball

2015 Founders Day bell ringers
Transfer of nursing archives

By April Anderson

The archives of the Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN) have officially been transferred to the University Archives. We are excited to have the MCN materials join the rest of our archival collections and are looking forward to preserving this extremely important historic record. A big thanks to Jean Ann Dargatz of MCN for help in coordinating the move and another big thanks to Ross Griffiths, Jenna Self, and Samantha Wolter for packing and taking inventory on over 100 boxes of Mennonites archives. Way to go, everyone! If anyone has any MHSN/MCN historical items that they would like to donate to the University Archives, please contact the Dean’s Office at MCN at (309) 438-2176.

100-Year History Book Survey of MCN alumni current and past faculty/staff, students, donors, and friends

The 100th-year celebration of the founding of Mennonite College of Nursing (originally Mennonite Hospital School of Nursing) is fast approaching in 2019. In preparation for that event we are interested in gathering information for a book that will include the early history and also the years from 1995-present. Two previous books cover 1919-1995. The vision is that a history book sharing 100 years of stories will be written. We would like to hear what you think should be included as we tell the story of a century of nursing education through MCN and its people. The 100-Year History Book committee, including the author, will make final decisions regarding inclusions, but we need YOU to provide the direction and suggestions. Your input is very important as we embark on the gathering of stories that will reflect our past and help celebrate and continue to build on the excellence that is MCN.

Please complete the following survey, and submit this form in the attached envelope. (Send us your update as well since it is on the other side of this form.) You may also fill out the form online at Nursing.IllinoisState.edu/History, or email the Dean’s Office at hmwinfre@IllinoisState.edu with your responses and attachments by September 15.

1. What five to 10 stories/ideas/innovations, etc. should be included in the history book?

2. When you think of significant people in MCN’s history, who must be included or mentioned as particularly influential?

3. What other information would you like to see included?

If you would like to submit a story idea and/or photos, please fill out the following:

First Name ____________________________________   Middle Name _________________________________________________
Maiden Name__________________________________   Last Name____________________________________________________
Alumni: please include the year of the program(s) you graduated: ____ Diploma ____ B.S.N. ____ M.S.N. ____ Doctoral
Current/former faculty/staff: please include: title(s) ____________________________________________ Years employed: ____________
Primary phone___________________________________   Primary email address___________________________________________

NOTE: By submitting content covered by intellectual property rights (story ideas, photos, documents, etc.), you grant the Board of Trustees of Illinois State University a non-exclusive, transferable, sub-licensable, royalty-free, worldwide license to copy, sell, use, distribute any IP content submitted for any purpose through any and all media. You also agree to release the Board of Trustees of Illinois State University, its agents and assigns, from any and all claims of any kind or nature arising out of, in any way, the use of content.
Alumni updates

We welcome updates from alumni for *The Flame*. We want to know about your activities, career news, family news, and other significant activities (weddings, births, honors and awards, promotions, changes in employment, personal accomplishments, etc.). We will also submit your information to *Illinois State* magazine. Please return this form to Illinois State University, MCN Public Relations Office, Campus Box 5810, Normal, IL 61790-5810, or email amirvin@IllinoisState.edu. Thank you for sharing your news!

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