Greetings!

Let me begin by thanking you all for re-electing me as your District Four President. Again, I will say that I will make every effort to represent us well. I will work with the Board, the Committees, and the members to continue to meet our potential.

I want to focus on some of the key happenings this year and especially some of our “firsts”. Our usual seminar offering in February did not materialize. Therefore, we did a joint meeting with District Three by way of satellite links at various sites such as Presbyterian, Medical City, etc. Cindy Zolnierek from TNA was the guest speaker.

This year District Four, District Three, and NTONE worked together as a steering committee to plan and produce our Annual Great 100 Nurses Celebration for Dallas/Fort Worth at the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center on April 19, 2009. Beth Mancini was honored as the founder and for her many contributions to the event over the years. The Steering Committee continues to work on the process and to plan for the event in 2010 and to determine a permanent home for the funds that are currently in the Parkland Foundation.

Our annual planning meeting was held on May 21, 2009 at the law offices of Nancy Roper Willson; my thanks to her for her hospitality. The meeting was productive; we completed our agenda. Included was discussion about the functions of our Careers Committee and how to focus. Conversation focused on offering a program/training to help transition nursing students to their new role as a professional, the merits of a speakers bureau, services to support students, etc.

Hollie Williams, President of Texas Nursing Students’ Association, attended our June dinner meeting at Presbyterian to observe. She is interested in working with us to help new graduates get involved in TNA especially here in the Dallas area. At that June 11, 2009 meeting, Fran Martin was our speaker, and we presented our annual awards and introduced our new Officers, Directors, Nominating Committee and Delegates to the TNA House of Delegates.

On July 18, 2009, District Four collaborated with the North Texas School Nurse Association to promote CE’s for their annual seminar at Region 10. The attendance was good.

Lastly, I want to thank our Board, our Committees, and Pat for all their work and support this year. I look forward to the new year!

Sincerely,

Colleen Hines, MS, RN,
CPCE, CDE, CT
The 81st Legislative Session was filled with a number of Bills that impact professional nursing practice and the healthcare of Texas’ citizens. By the time this article goes to print, Fran Martin, our Grassroots Legislative Liaison, will have presented an update (“What Changes Has the Texas Legislature Brought to My Practice This Time?”) for TNA D-4 members at the June Membership Meeting. There is not adequate space to review in detail the wealth of news from this Session, but a summary of key Legislative actions follows:

- **S.B. 1** - Final Appropriations Bill to fund efforts that address the Nursing shortage totals $49.7 million.
- **S.B. 476** (Nurse Staffing Bill) – places existing flexible nurse staffing requirements currently in the hospital licensing rules in the statute to include - a standing nurse staffing committee comprised of 60% of members being direct care nurses selected by their peers, reporting to the hospital’s governing board.
- **H.B. 1489** – union-backed ratios staffing Bill died in committee.
- **S.B. 1415** – provides the Board of Nursing (BON) additional disciplinary options for addressing minor violations – aimed at creating a less punitive regulatory environment for nurses and create a safer culture for patients.
- **H.B. 4961** – codifies BON rules relating to complaints, sanctions, and administrative penalties and includes provisions relating to the confidentiality of nurses’ information collected for emergency relief programs and authorization for physical and psychological evaluation in cases where the BON believes the nurse is unable to practice safely due to mental or physical impairment or chemical dependency. This Bill also includes an amendment with provisions from H.B. 4355 that provides recognition for Excelsior College’s nursing program as substantially equivalent to the BON’s standards, but also subject to sunset review in 2017. This legislation also requires the Texas Center for Workforce Studies to contract with an independent researcher to determine alternative methods for ensuring competency of clinical graduates, including those from Excelsior College.
- **H.B. 4353** – authorizes the BON to issue a special license (valid for 1 year) to RNs licensed in Mexico who meet the current Texas licensure requirements, except for a score of 475 on the TOEFL (current requirement is 560). These nurses may only practice in hospitals in counties located on the Texas/Mexico border. At the end of one year, the nurse may apply for a full license and must score 560 on the TOEFL.
- **S.B. 532** – expands the scope of practice of advanced practice nurses and physician assistants. The Bill decreases on-site time for delegating physicians, expands parameters for delegated prescriptive authority and increases distance allowed between alternate sites and physician’s residence or primary practice sites. S.B. 532 also provides for the use of electronic options in the delegation registration and medical record review process.
- **H.B. 2719** – waiving sovereign immunity for nurses employed by state or governmental entities from seeking remedies in court for retaliation when engaging in protected patient advocacy activities, but the Bill died on the House calendar.
- **S.B. 790** – would have established mandatory reporting for hospitals related to the projected number of clinical hours available to professional nursing education programs. The Bill died in the House Public Health Committee
- **S.B. 791** – would have transferred the regulation of certified nurse aides and determination of scope of practice to the BON, but the Bill died in the House Public Health Committee.
- **H.B. 4471** – authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to offer grants to nursing schools with graduation rates of less than 70%.

The TNA D-4 GAC was actively involved in responding to “Calls to Action” throughout the 81st Legislative Session. Texas Nurses continue to have a strong voice in issues that affect professional nursing practice and safe care for Texas citizens. We would like to thank you for your contributions to achieving successful outcomes for TNA-supported legislation. With more than 7,000 Bills filed this legislative session and more than 1,000 related to nursing and healthcare, Texas Legislators depend on nurses to educate them about issues about which we have great knowledge and expertise. Please get to know your legislators and continue to educate them about issues that impact professional nursing and healthcare for Texans so that the “Voice” of Texas nurses remains strong!

Reference:

TNA, D-4 well represented at TNA House of Delegates

Texas Nurses Association, District Four was well represented at the TNA House of Delegates held in April, 2009, in Austin, Texas. D-4 Delegates to the TNA House of Delegates pictured left to right are: Colleen Hines, Nancy Roper Willson, Jeanie Zelanko, Frances (Frankie) Phillips, Ellen L. Palmer, and Barbara Devitt
Congratulations to Jane Baker Nunnelee, PhD, RN, GNP  
Texas Nurses Association, District Four 2009 “Nurse of the Year”

In 1973, Jane became a member of the first Geriatric Nurse Practitioner class at Texas Woman’s University. She was willing to risk this new venture. Jane loves the elderly and animals – a great contribution. Once, she hid a kitten in her raincoat and brought it to the nursing home where she was having clinical. She really brightened the day for the lonely residents.

Jane started her own clinic, more as an act of charity than anything else. She always wanted to help; she never hesitated to be available. Over the years, Jane has had to deal with several difficult personal tragedies, but she never faulted. She was always there if needed. Jane has had to overcome many professional barriers, as colleagues could not understand why she wanted to be around “old people” and scruffy animals. Jane persisted.

She became the first doctoral graduate of UNT’s Practice in Aging program. In fact, her professors were so proud of her that one actually had tears in his eyes. She continues her ties to UNT as an adjunct faculty and mentor. All this is in addition to her work as a professor at the Louise Herrington School of Nursing Baylor University and in conducting her clinic.

Her doctoral dissertation was “The Effects of Pets on Loneliness in the Elderly”. She was invited to present her dissertation at the Sigma Theta Tau conference in Vienna, Austria, where she was such a “hit”, the audience did not want her to leave the room. Jane has subsequently made a trip to China (by special invitation only) to explain her various roles in clinical and academic nursing. She is also a published author. She has served on several TNA, D-4 committees. She is also a former TNA, D-4 board of director.

Not many nurses know that Jane has made it possible for older nurses to attend our TNA meetings, for she goes and picks them up. She also provides a little nursing care, if needed.

Jane is an excellent role model of what our professional image and practice should be. Jane deserves our accolades. Jane will receive her plaque at the September 3rd General Membership Meeting.

Congratulations JANE!
Congratulations to Mary Gilliland, TNA, D-4
“Dolores M. Alford Lifetime Achievement” Recipient

Mary Gilliland was named TNA, D-4 “Dolores M. Alford Lifetime Achievement” award winner at the June, 2009 Annual Awards Dinner held at Presbyterian Hospital.

Mary has been a member of ANA, TNA, and TNA, D-4 since 1991. She has been instrumental in the success of TNA, D-4’s Continuing Education program both in Pulse Magazine and on-site continuing education. She is a former Board of Director for TNA, D-4 and also served on the Mock Trial Committee. She has also been on several state committees, and has always been a mentor of nursing students.

Mary’s expertise and knowledge has been the guiding/driving force for the success of the Continuing Education Committee for TNA, D-4.
Travel, Study, Learn Cultural Immersion
The UT Arlington School of Nursing Center for Hispanic Studies in Nursing and Health
Cuernavaca, Mexico, January 1-8 or May 14-21, 2010

This immersion program is designed for nurses, health professionals and faculty in all health-care settings who wish to begin or refine Spanish language skills and learn about Mexican culture and health firsthand. The program includes intensive Spanish language and culture study; field trips to hospitals, local cultural and historical sites; a welcome reception; lodging and food with a Mexican family; and a Spanish language certificate from the Universidad Internacional in Cuernavaca, Mexico. This activity provides up to 36 contact hours. The cost of attending is $1350 plus airfare. To register for the trip, a $675 deposit is due Oct. 16 (Mar. 5 for May). The balance of $675 is due Nov. 27 (Apr. 2 for May). For additional information, contact Dr. Wendy Barr at 817-272-5376 or barr@uta.edu or visit our website http://www.uta.edu/nursing/centers/hispanic/travel_study_learn.php. Medical Spanish classes also offered at UT Arlington School of Nursing. Contact Dr. Mary Lou Bond at 817-272-1271 or mlbond@uta.edu.

Outgoing Secretary-Treasurer Vicki Joswiak and Board of Director Celeste Johnson were presented plaques for their respective service to D-4 by President Colleen Hines.

Fran Martin presented the keynote address for the June Annual Dinner, Awards Ceremony, and Installation of Officers.
Congratulations to Vicki Joswiak, TNA, D-4 “Member of the Year, 2009”

Vicki Joswiak was named the TNA, D-4 “Member of the Year” at the June Annual Dinner, Awards Ceremony, and Installation of Officers held at Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas. Vicki is the outgoing Secretary-Treasurer of TNA, D-4 and is directly responsible for the improvements in the accounting system of the District and the Continuing Education Program as well as the Providership that D-4 has (D-4 is the only district that has its own providership).

Vicki received her BS and MS from Texas Woman’s University College of Nursing, Denton, Texas. She received her Masters in Human Relations & Business from Amberton University. Vicki is employed by Parkland Health & Hospital System as Associate Director, Nursing Administration.

She is a member of ANA, TNA, and TNA, D-4. She has served as a Member of the TNA, D-4 Continuing Education Committee, as well as a Member of the 2005 TNA, D-4 Nominating Committee. She also is a former Board of Director for D-4. Vicki currently serves as an appointed position on the TNA Continuing Education Committee.

Congratulations Vicki!

Congratulations to William (Bill) Turner, Texas Nurses Association, District Four’s “2009 Consumer of the Year”

Bill Turner was a member of the Dallas Times Herald Healthcare Recruitment Advertising Department from 1985 to December, 1991. He later was employed by DFW Nursing as Marketing Director (a magazine started by a nurse) from January, 1992 to April, 1993. He was Publisher for Nursing, the magazine for DFW nurses from May, 1993, to November, 1994. He was employed by Nurseweek as the Texas Account Manager from December, 1994 to November, 1996. Bill owned a Healthcare Recruitment Ad Agency called InHouse Creative Services from November, 1996 to May, 2002. He has also been employed as Advertising Manager of Pulse Magazine from May, 2002 to March, 2006. Currently, Bill is Publisher of the Nurses Lounge. He is married to wife Susan, has one daughter, Mallory, and one stepson, Parker.

Bill has been a staunch supporter of the “Great One Hundred Nurses Celebration” for several years. He has provided much coverage of the event as well as providing the program booklet, pictures, and the video presentation for the last several years.

Congratulations Bill!