



**American  
Red Cross**

# Nursing Matters Past and Present

American Red Cross National Nursing Committee

36th Edition

Fall 2019

## Chief Nurse Initiatives FY2020: Promoting Resilience Through Humanitarian Service

Linda MacIntyre, PhD, RN, PHN



American Red Cross nursing is rooted in humanitarian service. The Red Cross “makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give

priority to the most urgent cases of distress.” This humanitarian service is what draws many nurses and other health professionals to volunteer with the Red Cross.

The Red Cross supports individuals and families where they live, work and play. “Conditions in the places where people live, learn, work and play affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes. These conditions are known as social determinants of health (SDOH)” ([CDC Research on SDOH](#) and [Healthy People 2020, SDOH.](#))” Nurses have an integral role in this work.

Red Cross nursing primarily focuses on population health - often for the most vulnerable members of society, and those who are most in need of having their complex health and social needs met. We need to recognize the strengths of the individuals we serve. Although someone may be regarded as vulnerable or in need, it is important to recognize and celebrate their strengths to foster resilience.

The annual Chief Nurse Initiatives include senior leader priorities for health professional volunteers across the business lines of service. The Chief Nurse Initiatives for FY2020 (July 2019-June 2020) have three overarching goals:

- **Engage nurses and other health professionals enterprise-wide**
- **Support volunteerism across the lifespan**
- **Promote health and resilience within our communities**

### Recruitment and Engagement

Nursing Network Regional Nurse Leaders, Nursing and Health leaders and Red Cross partners collaborate to recruit and engage health professionals wherever needed to meet Red Cross goals. Health professionals have expertise and skills necessary for a variety of volunteer leadership, behind-the-scenes and direct service roles. While some positions have licensure requirements, many volunteer positions that health professionals can fill do not require a professional license.

Since 2012, the Red Cross National Nursing Committee has made concerted efforts to recruit Nursing and Health leaders that reflect the diverse communities we serve. This fiscal year we will develop a plan to foster inclusive recruitment and engagement of Volunteer Services Nursing and Health leaders.

### Provide consultation and support for Academic Service Learning

We will work to address barriers and facilitate pathways to success in Academic Service Learning. As students may be with the Red Cross for a short time, offering project-based volunteer work helps meet mutual needs. The relationship between the Red Cross and college/university faculty can promote a renewable workforce to deliver services in communities.

### Workforce Wellbeing, training, and recognition.

We are developing a toolkit for Workforce Wellbeing that draws on resources across the organization. Support for volunteers includes training, leadership opportunities, recognition and awards.

### Call to Action

We have not fully realized the positive impact that health professional volunteers can make in our

communities. Some may be limited by traditional ideas of what health professionals can do. It is our responsibility not only to share how health professionals can contribute to the Red Cross mission, but to demonstrate this.

The Chief Nurse Initiatives include opportunities across Red Cross business lines of service. This includes, but is not limited to, disaster health and mental health work, providing casework for members of the military, veterans and their families through Service to the Armed Forces, promoting blood donation and volunteering at

blood drives, providing Restoring Family Links casework for families separated due to civil unrest or war and supporting the Measles & Rubella Initiative.

We promote resilience and support individuals where they work, live and play through many different volunteer positions. Please join me in recruiting and engaging volunteers in Red Cross humanitarian service.

**Volunteer!** Contact [RedCrossNurse@redcross.org](mailto:RedCrossNurse@redcross.org) for more information.

### **‘Give Something That Means Something’ this Holiday Season**

Molly Dalton

This holiday season, the American Red Cross asks everyone to remember people in need and *Give Something that Means Something* during the organization’s annual Holiday Giving Campaign.

People can give a symbolic gift in honor of someone online, by mail or phone—details are available at [redcross.org/gift, including how to share](http://redcross.org/gift, including how to share) free holiday greeting cards with friends and family. [The gift is a tax-deductible donation to the American Red Cross.](#)

**HELP VICTIMS OF DISASTER** The Red Cross responds to more than 60,000 disasters every year, the majority of these home fires. During the Holiday Giving Campaign, a gift of \$50 can deliver hot meals for 5 people or blankets for 10 people after a disaster. A donation of \$100 can provide a family of two with a full day’s worth of emergency shelter with meals, snacks, blankets, a cot and hygiene supplies. Infants are also affected by disaster. A gift of \$45 can provide infant care supplies and a crib for someone’s baby.

**HELP FOR MILITARY** Supporters can also provide critical support for military members and veterans and help save lives around the world. A gift of \$145 can provide hospital kits to 20 members of the military. \$50 can help connect veterans and their families to critical community services such as food, housing, counseling and rehabilitation.

Together with the Red Cross partners in the Measles & Rubella Initiative, generous support from donors helps protect children against these deadly diseases by providing lifesaving vaccinations and educating families about the dangers of measles and rubella. A gift of \$100 can help provide lifesaving vaccinations for 100 children who face an increased risk of measles and rubella around the world.

Please remember the Red Cross mission during this holiday season. Your gift will help the people who look to the Red Cross for support every eight minutes here at home and around the world. #GiveWithMeaning at [redcross.org/gift](http://redcross.org/gift).

### **Hepatitis A Outbreak: Cochise County and American Red Cross, Partnering Response 2019**

Laura Crouch, EdD, RN, CPAN, CNE, Volunteer Disaster Health Services Advisor, Greater Phoenix Chapter

In April 2019, Cochise County Health and Social Services identified a hepatitis A outbreak in their rural southeastern Arizona population. Cochise County quickly recognized that they needed assistance from other healthcare partners to face this serious health threat and to meet the needs of their rural residents in a timely manner, especially for the vulnerable, at-risk populations.

In May, Cochise County approached the American Red Cross Southern Arizona and Greater Phoenix Chapters regarding the need for more registered nurses to provide hepatitis A education, screening and vaccine administration. The partnering coordination quickly became a reality, with well-orchestrated planning for the roles and expectations for partnering, scheduling shifts, travel, sleeping and eating arrangements. The Red Cross identified

several volunteer RNs who could assist the Cochise County public health staff develop teams to set up stationary clinics and to visit several sites where



Red Cross nurses Cheryl Taylor, RN and Kathy Hay, RN pictured with Cochise County Health workers, partnering for hepatitis A response.

vulnerable, at-risk populations might be found.

Nine Arizona Red Cross RNs responded to the Cochise County

multi-disciplinary

team's need for backup assistance. These Red Cross nurses spent several days traveling with Cochise County health professionals throughout southeastern Arizona, meeting with rural residents. Hepatitis A education materials were widely distributed, health screenings were conducted, and at least 5,300 hepatitis vaccine injections were administered.

During this same time period, Maricopa County, a

### American Red Cross and National Black Nurses Association Partner to Serve

Rebecca Harris-Smith, EdD, MSN, BA

In 2016, Dr. Eric J. Williams, President of the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) appointed me to represent the NBNA as the liaison between the American Red Cross and the NBNA. Over the past three years I have had the honor of serving as a member of the National Nursing Committee. This committee is made up of a diverse group of individuals that promote nurse and other health professional volunteer engagement across the organization. Serving on this national committee affords me the opportunity to work collaboratively with nurses from across the nation to support nursing and health integration



From left to right: Dr. Carmen Kynard, Dr. Rebecca Harris-Smith, and Dr. Linda MacIntyre at the 2018 46<sup>th</sup> NBNA Annual Institute and Conference.

throughout the Red Cross in order to reach more people in more communities. As the representative of NBNA, my goal is to advocate and assist with the development of strategies that will provide access and inclusion of the needs of the African American

large south-central Arizona county that includes Phoenix but also has some remote rural areas, was also facing a hepatitis A outbreak. They reported that each hospital admission that could be prevented would save about \$25,000, and each emergency visit that could be prevented could save several thousand dollars. The cost may be somewhat different in Cochise County, but their calculations can give an idea of the dollar value of prevention, underscoring the importance of supporting the health of at-risk residents.

Cochise County Health and Social Services has expressed their appreciation for the assistance the Red Cross nurses voluntarily provided. This partnering endeavor was a huge success, with evidence in the prevention of the spread of hepatitis A, improving outcomes for rural residents. Now Red Cross nurses in Arizona have additional experience in rapidly partnering and ready deployment to meet serious public health needs. Kudos to everyone who made this happen.

community.

This collaboration has resulted in the following:

- **Education:** The American Red Cross workshop: "Promoting Community Health Through NBNA-Red Cross Partnership" has been presented for the last several years at NBNA's Annual Institute and Conference. The 3-hour presentation focuses on:
  - Blood donation, changing demographics and strategies to increase diverse blood donor participation and the use of blood to improve patient outcomes
  - Academic Student Learning projects that will provide nursing students with the strategies and ability to make an impact on the local community
  - Measles and Rubella Initiative to raise awareness of the local and global impact, emphasizing the minor cost required to eliminate this disease both nationally and internationally
- **Volunteerism**
  - In 2016, my husband and I volunteered with the Red Cross in Baton Rouge, Louisiana following a devastating flood. This experience

provided us personal knowledge and experience in the field. We have committed to making this a once a year activity upon my retirement.

- NBNA provides national member notification to encourage engagement and participation in local and national disasters.
- NBNA notifies members of Red Cross recruitment efforts for available Nursing Network Regional Nurse Leader positions across the nation. Both organizations are interested in the recruitment of African American nurses to serve in this capacity.
- **Financial Support:** In 2018, NBNA secured a \$2,000 donation in support of the Measles and Rubella Initiative.
- **Giving Back:** At the 46<sup>th</sup> NBNA Annual Institute and Conference, the NBNA committed to partnering with the Red Cross or a local blood bank (if Red Cross is not available) to host a blood drive during all future conferences. To date, we have hosted two successful blood drives, at the 2018 St. Louis and 2019 New Orleans conferences. We are currently gearing up to host our third blood drive in Hollywood, Florida.



Dr. Harris-Smith donating blood at the 46<sup>th</sup> NBNA Annual Institute and Conference in collaboration with the St. Louis American Red Cross Blood Center.

- **Community Outreach:** Increase external awareness about the work of

nursing and Academic Service Learning (ASL) using the Red Cross Pillowcase Project. ASL volunteer/instructors educate children ages 8-11 on home fire and disaster safety. This project is being used to recruit and engage future healthcare professionals.

- In March 2018, at South Louisiana Community College (SLCC) Dr. Nellie Prudhomme hosted the ASL Pillowcase Project with the Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) students. This age/grade-appropriate, evidenced-based activity provided a teaching/learning opportunity for the SLCC nursing students and all 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in Iberia Parish, Louisiana.

Please let me extend a heartfelt “Thank you” to Dr. Eric Williams, NBNA Immediate Past President; Dr. Millicent Gorham, NBNA Executive Director and Dianne Mance, Conference Services Manager for the support and encouragement they provided during my tenure. A special “Thank you” is also given to Dr. Linda MacIntyre, Red Cross Chief Nurse and Dr. Carmen Kynard, Red Cross National Chair of Nursing for affording me the opportunity to serve as guest speaker at the American Red Cross workshop.

*Editor's note:* Dr. Rebecca Harris-Smith is a member of the NBNA Board of Directors, is the NBNA's liaison to the American Red Cross on the Red Cross National Nursing Committee, and is Dean of Nursing and Allied Health at South Louisiana Community College in Lafayette, Louisiana.

## Jean Van Voorhis Retires After 20 Years of Red Cross Volunteering

Vivian Littlefield, PhD, RN, FAAN

*“Not everybody can be famous. But everybody can be great, because greatness is determined by service.” Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Jean Van Voorhis, MSN, RN, recently announced her retirement from her over 20-year second career of volunteering at the American Red Cross. Her contributions and dedication will be sorely missed by all who worked with her.



Jean Van Voorhis was born in Des Moines, Iowa. As a young girl, she visited the sick with a neighbor doctor and decided early on that she would be a nurse. She received her RN license after graduating from Iowa Methodist Hospital School of Nursing in Des Moines then received a BS and MS from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is married

and has two children.

Van Voorhis traveled the world, from Hadrian's Wall to the Great Wall of China to the Great Barrier Reef, from Karnak and the Valley of the Kings to Canterbury where she searched for an ancestor, Archbishop William Whittlesey.

Her life's dream was to work with others to help others. During her career her work was instrumental in the new field of infection control. Nurse epidemiology was a most rewarding, satisfying career. She was invited to help institutions across the country start their own programs in infection control. She published her work and brought that knowledge and skill to the Red Cross after retiring.

Van Voorhis says, “My greatest experience in my professional life and Red Cross volunteering has been helping people in need – helping them financially and clinically by linking them to the right resources or providing immediate care to individuals and their families – as well as participating in disaster management decisions. I also need to thank my husband, Don for his support over the past 20 years. Without being an official volunteer, he has transported Disaster Health Services (DHS) volunteers and taken conference photographs that were used in the final event report. He also kept the home fires burning and cared for my 93-year-old mother for three of my volunteer years.”

Here are some of the many and varied ways Van Voorhis has made a difference:

- Served as a National DHS Manager and Staff Wellness Manager, serving in both positions in multiple disasters, including Level 4’s
- Served as DHS Advisor for Iowa Region and Tampa Bay Chapter
- Served as DHS Lead in Iowa Rivers Chapter, and in Tampa Bay and Pasco County Chapters
- Served as a National DHS Liaison at American Red Cross Washington, D.C. headquarters for several years
- Served across the country as Quality Review Facilitator for the Disaster Preparedness Response and Recovery Quality Review Program
- Served as State Nurse Liaison and State Nurse Liaison Advisor in Florida
- Member of Pasco County Emergency Management and Pasco Health Care facilities with regard to facility communication systems and evacuation and shelter in place policies, procedures and employee education
- Collaborated with Florida Pasco County Department of Health to recruit Red Cross DHS volunteers to participate in a church parking lot drive-through administration of free flu shots to the community
- Participated in Iowa and Florida community disaster drills including nuclear disaster and airplane crash
- Collaborated with Iowa Red Cross blood bank and the National Nursing Committee to interest and recruit student nurses to educate community groups regarding the need for blood donations
- Taught Psychological First Aid, Family Assistance, DHS and community table top activities

- Taught Disaster Preparedness and Response in Poweshiek County, Iowa to service groups, firemen, farmers’ wives and business organizations
- Assisted Iowa Region Human Relations to organize community health services and university personnel to volunteer at the Iowa State Fair First Aid Stations
- Volunteered at Iowa State Fair First Aid Stations
- Member of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and DHS committee responsible for reviewing and revising existing DHS forms
- Member of Heritage Committee, newsletter editor and frequent author
- Member of national Service to Armed Forces (SAF) review committee responsible for reviewing HIPAA guidelines as they relate to SAF medical liaison purpose and role and for making recommendations for system changes to the SAF medical liaison role
- Member of SAF Medical Liaison program
- Assisted the Tampa SAF director to collect data regarding contact information of hospital personnel responsible for SAF contacts.
- Wrote the initial Red Cross isolation and infection control policies and procedures
- Produced, edited and published FOCUS DHS newsletter for three years
- Received numerous Red Cross awards, including Clara Barton Award, Iowa and Florida chapters’ service awards and Iowa Regional Award
- Received Iowa 100 Great Nurses award

Of these activities in service and leadership, Jean says: “The American Red Cross and especially DHS gave me valued experience and purpose after retirement. I am proud of the service I provided and the mentors, volunteers and clients I met and worked with. I will always be a Red Cross Nurse.”

We, the Red Cross Nursing Network and leadership, are proud of and thankful for Jean Van Voorhis, a 20-year, committed, competent, caring volunteer! Van Voorhis notes she is sad to complete her Red Cross service but her “memories will always be with her.” The American Red Cross will always remember her dedication and service.



Jean Van Voorhis, right, and Dr. Vivian Littlefield at a Red Cross nurses meeting in Florida in 2012.

**25 Iowa Red Cross Nurses Receive Nurse Pins**

Becky Greenwald, Regional Volunteer Services Officer

This summer the American Red Cross Iowa Region honored twenty-five registered nurses and recognized their volunteer work with the

organization. Each registered nurse was presented a uniquely numbered Red Cross registered nurse pin and *The Creed of the Red Cross Nurse*.

Unity Point Health's Nursing Honor Guard were special guests at the Central Iowa Chapter Annual meeting and paid tribute to Red Cross nurses. They read the Nightingale Pledge, a pledge named after Florence Nightingale,



Unity Point's Nurses Guard at Central Iowa's Annual Meeting.

Recognizing American Red Cross nurses is a long-time tradition and valued honor because the organization was founded in 1881 by amateur nurse Clara Barton. In 1909, Jane Delano created the nursing service that continues to thrive today. Every day Red Cross nurses put their many skills to work increasing community resilience and responding to disasters at home and across the nation. In the past, nurses who received the RN pin were expected to be buried with it or return it to the American Red Cross. Today, each unique nursing pin number is entered into the volunteer's Red Cross profile and nurses should also maintain a record. The pins no longer need to be returned to National Headquarters.

**Tanya Porter to Receive Certificate of Merit Lifesaving Award**

Tanya Porter, RN was selected for one of the Red Cross' highest Lifesaving Awards, the Certificate of Merit, for her heroic acts after the Amtrak Cascades Train 501 derailment outside of Dupont, Washington on December 18, 2017. Porter will be presented with the award, signed by the president, at a conference in Seattle in December. Porter is also a 2019 Florence Nightingale Medal recipient. If you missed the article about her in the summer 2019 edition of this newsletter, you can read it [here](#).

**Jane Delano Nursing Scholarship Recipient Teona Feldpausch**

The Jane Delano Nursing Scholarship was recently awarded to Teona Feldpausch. Feldpausch is a Junior in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at Spring Arbor University in Michigan. She is also a basketball player, a student employee for Chartwell's Food Service and the president of the American Red Cross "Blood Club" on campus. Outside of school, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, reading, traveling, being



The Iowa nurses who were recognized are, by chapter:

**Northeast Iowa Chapter:** Lon Butikofer, Sandra Butikofer, Dana Hall, Julie Johnson, Nancy Sacquitne and Susan Tranel.

**South and Eastern Iowa Chapter:** Norine Drahozal, Mary Hawk, Bryce Henson and Arlene Prather-O'Kane.

**Central Iowa Chapter:** Juli Bretz, Pam Deichmann, Louette Ebeling, Nicolette Hamilton, Shirlee Reding, Thomas Schulte, Susan Smith, Sandra Stewart and Andrea Wilhite.

**North and Western Iowa Chapter:** Nancy Dykstra, Heather Sprecher, Raymond Decker, Cathy Grimsley, Shane Nelson and Victoria Siemers.

A symbol of service and a proud American Red Cross tradition, [nursing pins](#) are a way to honor the contributions of nurses and nursing students who are providing valuable Red Cross services to their communities. Originally referred to as *badges*, these pins connect nurses and nursing students with the organization, past and present, while promoting service and volunteerism across the lifespan as a perpetual call to serve the mission of the Red Cross. In addition to the numbered RN pins, the American Red Cross also has pins recognizing the contribution of nursing students, Licensed Practical Nurses and Licensed Vocational Nurses.

outdoors and doing mission work. Feldpausch first heard of the American Red Cross in high school, where she helped unload and reload the truck for blood donation drives a few times. When she went to college in Spring Arbor she was eager to get involved with the Red Cross Club on campus. Now as a volunteer and leader she holds club meetings, recruits donors, volunteers during blood drives and gets the word out about the Red Cross and blood

drives. She says that being a nursing student has helped her see how crucial blood donations are to saving people’s lives.

Feldpausch has observed that blood donations aren’t only important in the U.S. but are needed all over the world. She has seen how one person can truly make a huge difference in other countries as well. She traveled to Uganda last summer and witnessed a medical and dental clinic being run in a local village. A friend from the village, who is a regular blood donor, talked with her about blood drives and explained how blood donations are in

great need in that country. This summer she traveled back to Uganda and helped work in a clinic in addition to some other ministry work.

Feldpausch says, “Getting involved as a Red Cross volunteer or donor is just one of several things people can do to help make a difference in this world. I’m excited for this school year and to see all that the American Red Cross does in the future! Thank you to the American Red Cross for all they do and for choosing me as the Jane Delano 2019 Nursing Scholarship recipient.”

**Red Cross Nurses Train the Next Generation of Nurse Volunteers**

Sahar Nouredini, PhD, RN



Dr. Sahar Nouredini, Assistant Professor, Department of Nursing and Health Sciences, article author and coordinator of the DHS course at CSUEB

In response to the increasing frequency of natural disasters, faculty at California State University East Bay (CSUEB) Department of Nursing decided that more emphasis needed to be placed on training students about a nurse’s role in disaster response.

Every semester, senior nursing students enrolled in the Community Health Nursing course

at CSUEB have the opportunity to participate in the disaster health and sheltering course provided by the Red Cross. In order to participate in the training, students must complete three online modules through the Red Cross’ learning management system EDGE before participating in a table top exercise that is facilitated by Red Cross nurse volunteers who have experience working in shelters.

encourage students to volunteer in shelters by sharing examples of how nursing students have assisted in shelters in the past.

Sebilias has volunteered in many capacities since joining the Red Cross twelve years ago. Having the opportunity to teach the disaster sheltering course provides him with a unique opportunity to train nurses entering the field. “The greatest satisfaction I get from teaching the class is a feeling I’m hopefully influencing the next generation of Red Cross volunteers. It’s also rewarding knowing they are more prepared to help out in disasters.”

Rachel Meier is a current nursing student and a former service member in the United States Coast Guard. She recently completed the training and found the group interactions and working through scenarios to be very helpful. The interactive component helped to bring ideas and concepts full circle and allowed for interaction and insight into complex disaster situations.



Rachel Meier

Meier said that the training helped to provide insight about the roles nurses can play in disaster responses, what resources and services are available in disaster situations, and who to contact for what. She found it to be a good overview of what can happen in a shelter situation, what kinds of questions and people you may encounter, and how to address them or where to get help for them.

Red Cross nurses Bert Sebilias, MSN, RN and Valerie Rodriguez, RN, facilitated the most recent training at CSUEB. Both have been deployed to shelters during recent natural disasters and have a passion for teaching. What makes them particularly



Bert Sebilias, MSN, RN

effective facilitators is that they weave in their own personal experiences of volunteering in Red Cross shelters throughout the training. Their stories are captivating and help illustrate the complexity of running a shelter as well as the importance of critical thinking in developing solutions to complex scenarios. They also

When asked if she would volunteer in a shelter in the future, Meier stated “I would absolutely volunteer in a shelter. I have had some experience in search and

rescue and have been fortunate enough to help people in critical and traumatic situations. Seeing how overwhelming and almost paralyzing these kinds of situations can be for people makes you realize everyone has moments of vulnerability. If I'm able and in a position to help that person and ease their burden, I would do what I could."

### A Century of Mitigating Measles

More than 500 high school students visited American Red Cross National Headquarters this summer to learn about the current Measles and Rubella Initiative and the Red Cross' extraordinary history. As participants in the National Student Leadership Conference (NSLC) at American University with an interest in the Medicine and Health Care and Nursing programs, the students



Photo courtesy of NSLC.

Participants in the National Student Leadership Conference toured the Red Cross National Headquarters.

also toured several other locations, including the Johns Hopkins Medicine Simulation Center, University of Maryland, and Uniformed Services

University of the Health Sciences.

Archivist Susan Robbins Watson, Historical Programs and Archives, managed the tours of the historic 17<sup>th</sup> Street building. Usually tour guides lead up to 15 visitors through the building. We learned that two of us could easily handle 50 outstanding, inquisitive students in a tour with the help of Assistant Archivist, Alison Polivka, timing our rotating sessions. Student questions were often unique and always interesting.

James Noe, Program Officer, Measles and Rubella Initiative, coordinated the Red Cross experience for the five visits of students in the Hall of Service in the E Street building. As the last group arrived in early August, serendipitously I discovered a single page of the October 31, 1916, *The Red Cross Visiting Nurse*. I had never seen the publication in our library before and became particularly excited to find that this issue covered measles for the American Red Cross Town and Country Nursing Service.

The collaboration between the Red Cross and academic institutions has been mutually beneficial in training the next generation of nurses and Red Cross volunteers, as evidenced by the experience of CSUEB nursing students. For more information on how to volunteer to teach a course or how to set up training for a group of students, please contact [DHSstudent@redcross.org](mailto:DHSstudent@redcross.org).

Jean Shulman, RN

I learned that the first issue of the short-lived *Visiting Nurse* appeared in April 1915. There are several copies in the Red Cross records at National Archives but not a complete set. The leaflet allowed Red Cross nurses and affiliated organizations to discuss the success and problems of serving rural areas and small towns. It invited all members to become contributing editors. The issues are priceless today for finding names and locations of the first assigned



Transportation: one of the challenges of the country role for the Red Cross Town and Country visiting nurse.



This Red Cross visiting nurse carries the required bag and looks pleased with her mode of transportation, emblazoned with "Bridgeton Red Cross Public Health Service."

Town and Country nurses. Many nurses went on to careers in the Red Cross, including I. Malinde Havey, later Director of Public Health Nursing and Home Hygiene and Stella Fuller, one of the first Delano Nurses. Other

leaflet topics included Sanitary Inspections in County Districts, Health Insurance—Its Relation to National Health, Tuberculosis, Industrial Nursing and Health Teaching in Towns and Villages. A new bulletin for the Town and Country Nursing Service replaced *The Red Cross Visiting Nurse* in 1917.

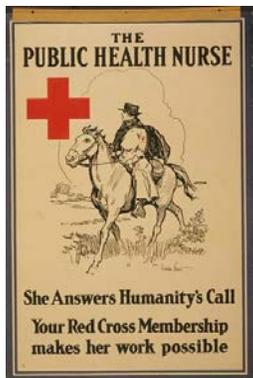
The headline of the 1916 edition read "Is the Control of Measles and Whooping Cough Practicable?" Dr. Francis G. Curtis presented the paper at the 1915 Session of the American Public Health Association. Over 100 years later, under very different conditions and with the existence of vaccines, measles remains an important concern for the American Red Cross.

Dr. Curtis addressed the widespread, mistaken belief of the public that measles and whooping

cough were not dangerous illnesses. “It is not necessary to say how erroneous is the belief that either one of the diseases in question is harmless or that both may be followed by serious, even fatal, sequelae.” Uninformed families hoped children experienced both diseases as early as possible. When the illness arrived in a neighborhood, “Measles Teas” provided an opportunity for mothers to share tea and children, measles\*\*\*. Grandmothers felt qualified to manage the disease as they had for generations. Nurses and physicians were considered not necessary, too expensive, or most often not available.

Although measles became a nationally notifiable disease by 1912, many cases never reached the community boards of health. Early symptoms are similar to the common cold and by the time the diagnosis is made, entire families or classrooms are exposed. In many families, only the first illness might be reported. Isolation of the patient was impossible in most homes. As Dr. Curtis noted, “It is easy to offer suggestions on paper but difficult to carry out in actual work.” His answer to the title of his paper at the time was “No.” The necessary means for quarantines, enforcement of health laws, establishment of reporting practices, and health education were not available in most rural areas.

The arrival of the Town and Country nurse in many communities helped create change. As Dr. William Welch, the first Dean of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine wrote, “America has made two great contributions to the cause of public health: The Panama Canal and the public health nurse.” The American Red Cross Town and Country Nurse was a true pioneer of this new



profession of nursing. Her presence in schools, baby welfare stations, and homes opened opportunities for teaching Red Cross classes. The nurse used the American Red Cross Textbook on Home Hygiene and Care of the Sick, written by Jane Delano, to

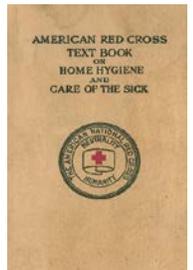


A home hygiene class.

explain the importance of disease prevention, health promotion, nutrition, and improved sanitary practices. As the introduction to the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition relates, “Today we serve best by preventing sickness. Cure of sickness and alleviation of suffering must never be neglected; but in prevention lies the hope of modern sanitary science, of modern medicine, modern nursing.”

Chapter XII of the book discusses the danger of measles and other childhood diseases, and still remains topical today:

“The so-called childhood diseases are probably the most familiar and least regarded of all those belonging to the communicable group. Most persons, it is true, realize that scarlet fever is serious; everyone should also realize that measles and whooping cough are serious. For example, in the State of New York during the year 1916, more children died from each of these diseases than from scarlet fever: in that year 745, or four times the number that died of scarlet fever, lost their lives from whooping cough, while 913 died of measles.



Every mother should realize that the children’s diseases are most infectious in the early stages. Early symptoms include fever, sore throat, and nasal discharge, and the trouble at first resembles a severe cold. During this stage the diseases are most easily communicated. Measles in particular is generally not recognized until its most infectious stage has passed. The moral to be drawn is that sore throats, coughs, and colds should never be regarded lightly, and that their spread should be prevented by all possible means.”

Through her knowledge and training, the Red Cross Visiting Nurse could decrease complications and mortality of measles in 1916. In 2019, the American Red Cross continues with efforts to control and eradicate measles worldwide through the Measles and Rubella Initiative. Hopefully many of the dedicated students who listened to Mr. Noe’s presentation and learned about our history will one day support Red Cross programs as health professionals.

\*\*\*Editor’s note: “Measles Teas,” that is, deliberate exposure to measles, was a **particularly bad** idea in the early 1900’s that has been shown by **evidence** to have **harmful** short- and long-term effects on the immune system.

## WGU Education Discount Available to Red Cross Employees and Volunteers

Did you know that Western Governors University offers special benefits to Red Cross employees and volunteers? Classes start the first of every month, so give them a call when you are ready to begin! From October 1 – January 1, 2020, employees and volunteers can receive a 5% tuition discount and an opportunity to apply for the WGU Red Cross Partner Scholarship. This offer is valid for all

degree programs, including nursing/health professions, business, IT or teaching. Please visit [WGU.edu/redcross](http://WGU.edu/redcross) for more information.

*Note: The Red Cross does not provide endorsement of academic institutions, but works with organizations to share opportunities with Red Cross employees and volunteers.*

## New Resource to Make IRA Gifts Simpler

Candace Roosevelt, MAN, MBA

There is a new tool that makes it easier for supporters to make smart gifts to the Red Cross. As you know, individuals who are age 70½ or older are required to take a minimum distribution from their individual retirement accounts (IRAs), resulting in taxable income. However, individuals can give all or part of this distribution to a charity like the Red Cross and avoid paying tax on this amount.

Though qualified charitable distributions (QCD) have many benefits, the process of setting one up—gathering the required information and finding the correct form—can be complex and time-consuming. That’s why the Red Cross has partnered with FreeWill.com, making it quick and easy for you to make a gift from your IRA. Simply:

- 1) Visit [FreeWill.com/QCD/RedCross](http://FreeWill.com/QCD/RedCross)
- 2) Calculate your required minimum distribution, excise tax penalty for not doing so and how much you want to give (maximum of \$100,000 annually)

- 3) Choose how you want to designate your contribution
- 4) Print and complete the required form and mail to your IRA holding institution

Please consider this new, efficient tool to help further your impact on the Red Cross lifesaving mission of alleviating suffering in the face of emergencies. So that charitable distributions are made before the end of the calendar year, all qualified supporters are encouraged to take action now.

*For more information on making an IRA gift to the American Red Cross, please contact Gift Planning Officer Candace Roosevelt at 617-306-3875 or by email [Candace.roosevelt@redcross.org](mailto:Candace.roosevelt@redcross.org).*

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### Help us get in touch with and recognize other current and former Red Cross Nurses!

Please send the email, phone, and address of your friends and colleagues to us at [RedCrossNurse@redcross.org](mailto:RedCrossNurse@redcross.org). Share this newsletter via email, Facebook, Twitter and your preferred social media. Go to <http://www.redcross.org/about-us/our-work/nursing-health/nursing-network> and select a link under “View Previous Issues.”

**Thank you!**