

The Ontario Link

Issue 50

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The Newsletter of the Ontario Nurses Christian Fellowship

Meet our new National Director

Carol L. Hamilton RN, CPIC, BScN, MDiv
National Director – NCF Canada

Greetings to you!

What a pleasure it is to communicate to those of you who reside in Ontario and are supporters of the Nurses Christian Fellowship! This is the first opportunity that I have had to speak with you so I thought I might share a little about who I am and how I was called to the position as National Director of NCF in Canada.



From the time I can remember, I have always wanted to be a nurse. I was raised in a Christian family and when I was twelve years old, our family began a singing ministry which would take us across three continents and into every church denomination over a span of twenty-five years. I was the middle of five children and in our singing ministry, I played flute and sang soprano. Despite my great love of music and ministry, my heart was continually drawn to the profession of nursing.

When I graduated from the University of Toronto in 1984, I began working in Public Health Nursing (in the days when PHNs did everything – Maternal/Infant visits, schools, senior visits and even presentations at local factories in health and safety. I returned to clinical nursing and worked for a time at Toronto General on an OBS/Gynecology floor and then to Etobicoke General to work in Labour and Delivery. I seriously considered pursuing a Masters Degree at this time but instead studied and wrote an exam to be certified as a Lactation Consultant (a brand new field of study in Canada in 1987).

As I spent several more years in Public Health nursing, I recognized that many young families were in crisis over the weekends and during the evening hours when physicians, clinics and public health services were inaccessible. Through a number of difficult clinical situations, I made the decision to leave traditional nursing and open a private practice in Toronto in order to offer crisis support and intervention to parents with young infants. In 1989, at this time in Ontario, there were only five other nurses who had pioneered in this style of nursing. I was truly entering uncharted territory.

To make a long story short, for the next eighteen years, my journey would take me across Canada and Great Britain providing education seminars to thousands of nurses and midwives. I would write and publish two books, assist thousands of families through the trauma of lactation challenges, infant death, post partum depression and even maternal death. I would complete a Master of Divinity degree with a special focus in counseling, pursue full-time parish ministry for a short time, conduct education seminars for clergy in caring for themselves and their parishioners when depression, chronic pain or compassion fatigue became a reality and then come to a place of waiting in my own life.

It was a year ago, while sitting at my desk one afternoon, that I picked up a copy of the **Canadian Nurse** and began to read it. As I came to the “*Job Opportunity*” section, I noticed a small ad indicating that IVCF was seeking a new National Director for the NCF ministry in Canada. I had been associated with NCF at the University of Toronto and I attended the North American conference in Birmingham, Alabama, and later, a retreat in Ontario where I had renewed my acquaintance with Ruth Copland and Anne Workman. I saw that the deadline for applications was only three days away and although I dismissed even considering this position at first, I was drawn back again and again to it over the next twenty-four hours. The next day, I gave Anne Hawes a call and inquired about this position. She was delighted to hear from me and encouraged me to consider applying for the position. I did so...and here I am.

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WANTED

**Christian Nurses
with a passion to
champion Christ in
the health care field.**

If you have a heart for your fellow nurses, I would love to speak to you about being a part of our Nurses Christian Fellowship organization.

Jackie Schmidt,
Ontario NCF
Chairperson

www.ncfcanada.ca,
under 'Contacts' -
click Ontario



Meet our New National Director

◀ Continued from page 1

I do not know where my life journey is taking me. I do know that God is with me and He has given me the gift of relationship with good people both in IVCF and NCF – two organizations that I know little about. I believe God wants me to be here until He calls me elsewhere.

I come to this role to offer my expertise in nursing, teaching and administration but I am still growing and learning. The older I get, the fewer answers I possess. I am learning the importance of asking many questions and doing lots of listening. I am learning that “doing” is good but “being” is better. My daily motto for life is this... “Each day I live is a gift of God’s grace!” I am only human, like all of you. I have family cares and responsibilities (I’m single but I have aunts, parents and siblings). I feel lonely at times. I am concerned about how God will provide for my financial needs when there is no guarantee of salary. I feel passionate about my Lord and His love for me and others and I deeply desire to make a difference in the lives of nurses in Canada.

“ Here I am Lord. Is it I Lord? I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.”

The words of this hymn mean much to me and it will be sung at a Service of Recognition that the Presbytery of Huron-Perth will be conducting to recognize me in my new role. It will take place on Sunday September 30 at 7:30 PM at Knox Presbyterian Church in Stratford and you are invited to come and participate, if you are able.

I am looking forward to meeting many of you in person and having the opportunity of getting to know you better. The Fall NCF

Workshop will also be an opportunity for you to learn a little more about me and others that are a part of this wonderful ministry. Anne Hawes has been a great blessing to many of you and I appreciate her and all she has done to bring NCF to this place in history.

Where we go from here has yet to be revealed but I believe that God has important work for us to do in this land and in the profession of nursing.

Will you join me in praying that God’s will and vision will be made clear in this year of assessment?

I am carefully listening to your stories of the past and the present needs of nurses, nursing students and faculty so that the ministry of NCF in Canada will impact the lives of many!

Will you financially support this ministry, generously, so that more time can be devoted to strategic planning, staff development and actual ministry?

Will you communicate with me about what you believe are the needs of nurses in this country and how NCF may be able to meet those needs effectively? On September 1, 2007, go to our new website: www.ncfcanada.ca and fill out the National Survey)

I can not do this work alone. The task is too great. But, together, we can make a difference.

Are you ready for the great adventure that lies ahead for NCF in Ontario – in Canada and around the world?

PLEASE PRAY...



For the nursing students at Brock U, Western U, Fanshawe College, McMaster U, Mohawk College, Ryerson, University of Toronto. Please pray for all nursing students in Ontario as they begin their new academic year.

Please pray for NCF's presence at the job fairs across the country . For the nurses who share their time volunteering at the booths and for those who stop and learn about NCF.

Praise and prayer for the new NCF groups in Hamilton/Halton area and in the Scarborough area. Pray for their leaders and the nurses who attend.

Please pray for the NCF Ontario Committee as we make plans for the coming year . If you are interested in being part of the committee please contact jackie.schmidt@sympatico.ca

If you are interested in praying with and for nurses around the world please go to our web site and click on the NCFI link

www.ncfcanada.ca

Upcoming Event

ONTARIO NCF

FALL SEMINAR

Saturday

October 20, 2007

9AM- 3PM

ROYAL BOTANICAL

GARDENS ,

BURLINGTON, ON

ENGAGING NURSES

IN

POSITIVE

LEADERSHIP :

STRATEGIES FOR

SUCCESS

Speaker

CAROL HAMILTON

National NCF Director

Cost \$75 for RN
\$50 for Nursing students
(Student scholarships available)

For more information and brochures email:

jackie.schmidt@sympatico.ca

Reflections: London Nurses Christian Fellowship Spring Breakfast with Jeannie Lockerbie Stephenson

Dayna Kapala,

University of Western Ontario, Year 4 Nursing

I have always believed that the best way to learn about a subject is to put oneself as near as possible to those who know it best. As I was finishing my third year of nursing school in April, I had the opportunity to take a study break and attend the annual Nurses Christian Fellowship breakfast. As I ate the delicious breakfast, I marvelled at the immense amount of nursing knowledge, wisdom, and experience in the room around me, as a wide variety of nurses gathered to enjoy God together.

Jeannie Lockerbie Stephenson spoke to us from 2 Peter 1:5-11 with her message entitled “Add to Your Faith”. Through her experiences as a nurse, author, and educator in the mission field, the Lord has granted her much wisdom, which she imparted to us with great ease and humour. She began by describing faith as the belief that God can and will do what He promised. With faith as our foundation, we can next add the seven qualities that help us to be effective and productive in our knowledge of Jesus. Peter called these qualities goodness, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, kindness, and love.

The characteristic of goodness most impressed me. Jeannie described this quality as “knowing what is right and being committed to doing it.” Throughout my nursing education, I have become more and more aware of my need to be close to God. I can only give my best to my patients when I know that the Sovereign Lord is my refuge, a shelter in the time of storm, and the only satisfier of my soul. When I commit my way to him, his divine power gives me all I need for life and godliness.

This was a timely reminder for me, as I will soon be beginning my nursing career and experiencing all the unknowns that go along with it. I am thankful to Jeannie for her honest reminder that faith in God is his gift given to us, which we must work out using the tools He has given us, all to the praise of his wonderful name.

Add to Your Faith



Every Tribe and Every Nation

Anne Hawes

Former National Director of NCF Canada

Do you know how many countries there are in the world? 194! Nearly 150 of these countries were represented at the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students World Assembly, held at Redeemer University College in Ancaster Ontario from July 11-19. IFES is comprised of member movements like Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship from around the world. Staff and student leaders were part of this quadrennial Assembly.

When first asked to manage the Medical Station, I thought of many objections – my nursing skills were rusty, I did not even know how to find my way to the Hamilton hospitals, nor did I know very many nurses in the Hamilton area. But as I prayed, God convinced me that this was a way in which He was calling me to serve Him in a specific, time-limited way. All I would have to do was purchase supplies and draw up a schedule for the nurses and physicians who volunteered to help.

I soon realized that it was not easy to find volunteers who are able to donate time in the middle of July! I often asked myself why I had ever agreed to take on this responsibility. Then, Carol Crossman contacted me saying she was willing to

help – and could possibly come for the entire conference. What a blessing! She immediately became my back-up person and assistant manager. Then, Dr. Chan from McMaster, sent me his pager number and offered to be on call for us. **God was working!**

Along with 8 other nurses, Carol and I staffed the Medical Station for 3 five-hour shifts every day. When we had someone to relieve us, we could take a break, or drive to a nearby pharmacy to re-stock our supplies. When the final count was tallied, 150 visits were made to our little office by 85 participants. What a privilege to care for God’s servants in such practical ways as soaking feet, administering medication to relieve headaches or stomach aches or

We saw our first case of Lyme Disease in one of the delegates who had travelled in New England prior to the conference. We listened with concern to a 39 year old man who had been told that he was at high risk for having a heart attack. The hospital in a far-off country had insisted that he be hospitalized (for a price of \$1800), but he felt he should get a second opinion. We rejoiced with him as Dr. Chan looked over all his reports and told him that all his test results were normal.

It grieved us to learn of corruption in health care in some parts of the world.

Carol also searched the Internet, trying to locate a portable nebulizer for one of the Caribbean delegates, “C”, to purchase for his 9 year old son who has asthma. When “C” stopped by our clinic with the compact nebulizer, we were almost as happy as he was! Together, we paused to thank God for leading him to the right supplier and to ask for improved health for Jonathan, his son.

We listened to stories – about life in Beirut and the constant fear of bombings; about students hungry for God’s Word and willing to risk their lives to proclaim Him; about children back home and hopes for their future.

On the last day of the conference, many of our clients returned to thank us – for caring, for serving and for making a difference. We, however, were the ones who felt blessed. When do we, as nurses, get the opportunity to spend 8 days meeting and caring for God’s servants from “every tribe and nation”?

I thank God for the awesome privilege of using my nursing skills in such a practical and rewarding way. A special thank you to Carol Crossman, Lii Baxter, Julie Desjardins, Margaret Enter, Betty Ireland, Fredrine Louis, Vicki St. John, Jackie Schmidt, and Rakhil Yunus for being part of the nursing team!



You are invited to join us - - financially

Muriel Wilson, Treasurer Ontario NCF

Last year the Ontario NCF Committee introduced a new aspect to its finances. We asked you to share the vision of the Committee's work through financial support. We are grateful for the 12 people who sent in donations for a total of \$880. Our year ended with enough funds to cover expenses.

This year we need about the same amount, i.e. \$900, to cover expected expenses. As in the past, our budget is \$5000. Our major expenses continue to be connected with the newsletter, special projects such as display booths at the RNAO and job fairs and support for the national

ministry. As was explained last year, over 80% of the expenses are funded by the generosity of current and former Committee members.

If you can help, make your donation cheque payable to:

Ontario NCF

and send it to Muriel Wilson (treasurer), 16 Rosemore Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2S 1A8. Through Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, receipts for income tax purposes will be issued for donations of \$20 and more.

Just a note - We are delighted to welcome Carol Hamilton as the new Canadian Director for NCF. We ask that you support both her and the Ontario NCF!

Tina's story: My call to nursing



The Ontario Nurses Christian Fellowship, an interdenominational ministry of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship among student and professional nurses.

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Please feel free to send articles ideas and submissions

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Tina was born in the Ukraine and she came to Canada when she was 4 years old. Tina is now 84 and wanted to share her story of how she was called to nursing.

I grew up on a farm on the prairies and attended a small country school until grade 8. As there was no local high school, I stayed home for a year and helped on our farm. I accepted the Lord as a teenager, my father was a lay minister and we held church services in our home, 65 people were often found each Sunday sharing lunch after the service.

I had wanted to serve the Lord as a missionary nurse, so I prayed to attend Bible School. I claimed God's promise in the Beatitudes and God answered my prayer! I was able to attend Winkler Bible School and began my classes when I was 17. It was there that the Lord spoke to me and called me to become a nurse.

To become a nurse, I needed to finish high school. My teacher at the Bible School taught us that nothing is impossible with God. He quoted from Psalms, "With God I can leap over the walls." I then decided to walk by faith and go back to high school.

Our family moved to St. Catharines and there I graduated from high school in 1947. It was during my high school days that I became involved with Intervarsity. Our IV staff leader, Ivy Hunt, encouraged us and each day we would pray for our plans. It took a lot of prayer and study for me to complete high school. I then began my nursing education at the Mack Training School at the St. Catharines General Hospital. They didn't think I would be accepted, because of my health problems, but I was.

While in nursing school, Terry Martens of the Nurses Christian Fellowship came and spoke to us. A few Christian students began to pray together and our group grew as more students and graduate nurses joined us. I graduated in 1950 and during this time, NCF grew. As a graduate, I attended Urbana with other nurses and we joined the Teachers' Christian Fellowship for joint studies.

I worked as a nurse with the Grenfell Mission for 1 year and then began nursing in Public Health. Following my retirement, I served as a volunteer in Oncology and in various mission fields (Ireland and Nicaragua). The Lord has led me all the way, I had promised to serve Him and He opened the way. Great is His faithfulness.

