



ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING



Alumnae Association Newsletter

Volume 67 Number 3 - Summer 2026

THE PRESIDENTS REPORT

By Marilyn Lynaugh Strafer, '80

I'm sure by now most of you have heard the news of the 96th Annual Luncheon either by letter, email, FaceBook announcement or word of mouth.

This has been a very trying time for your Board and Luncheon committee. Although we are very sad not to return to The Church of St. Francis Xavier and The Manhattan Penthouse, we are grateful to be able to salvage our beloved reunion at such short notice in the world of event planning. Using all her professional contacts, the event manager at the Penthouse, Monika Nemeth Talisse went above and beyond in assisting us in finding a suitable location at The Gallery Room at The Downtown Dream Hotel.

Although we need to make some sacrifices and the Alumnae Association will incur additional costs due to hotel union labor rules, we have decided not to raise the price of \$150 per person as we previously announced. Going forward, we will have to see how this year's event plays out financially, but we are confident that we will have a great turnout and reunite in camaraderie at our new location.

The Board was so moved with the Class of 1975's Nightingale Ceremony for their deceased classmates at last year's Mass that we have decided to incorporate it again this year. We are calling for any alums who are Nightingale Charter members to assist with the ceremony and any grads with a full white uniform, cap and cape to participate. Please contact us at svhalum@gmail.com if you would like to join in the ceremony.

I have a separate article with more luncheon and hotel information in this newsletter as

well as the response card for this year's attendees. Our website has also been updated with this information. This year we can accommodate more attendees so non-alumni may be included. So, reach out to your friends, classmates and former co-workers and organize your groups to attend this inaugural 'Dream' lunch.

In other news...

- The Board has voted to donate \$2500 to Sr. Kevin's favorite charity Nurses House in honor of her birthday in April.

- I was contacted by a paralegal from California about the passing a while ago of Elaine Julia Modiest, '57. Elaine has generously bequeathed the Alumnae Association \$1000. We are very appreciative of this gesture and are grateful to her family for this gift.

- We have two budding authors in our midst who deserve our attention and patronage. Thomas F. Rzeznik, Ph.D. has recently published a book of interest to our membership titled "A Monument of Charity: St. Vincent's Hospital and Catholic Health Care in New York City". Dr. Rzeznik gave a small presentation to board members in April, and we have extended him an invitation to present at an upcoming general alumni meeting in 2027.

- We have also heard from alum Jackie Bellacosa Kello, BSN, MFA, '68 that she has written a book about her journey as an artist as it relates to her nursing experience. I have included information about "Haven Art 2001 - 2013: A Studio Born from 9/11" that Jackie supplied in this edition. We are hoping to share more info from Jackie in 2027.



96TH ANNUAL LUNCHEON INFORMATION

By now, most of you have received the mailing of the changes to this year's luncheon. Due to the Manhattan Penthouse closing, the new venue will be at the Downtown Dream Hotel located at 355 West 16th Street between 8th and 9th Avenue. The Gallery Room will meet our needs, and the Mass will be hosted in the same room at 11:00AM, so no walking from church to the reception.

There has been some miscommunication as far as blocked rooms for those wishing to stay overnight. The wrong reservation code was provided. The correct code/link is:

<https://www.hyatt.com/events/en-US/group-booking/NYCDD/G-STVI>

OPTIONS:

Bronze King Room

\$449.00 - (EXCLUSIVE of taxes), single/double occupancy
\$66.23 - NY State/NYC taxes of 14.75% per day
\$3.50 - occupancy tax per day
\$518.73 - INCLUSIVE of all taxes, additional fees NOT included.

Bronze Two Double Bedded Rooms

\$499.00 - (EXCLUSIVE of taxes), single/double occupancy
\$73.60 - NY State/NYC taxes of 14.75% per day
\$3.50 - occupancy tax per day
\$576.10 - INCLUSIVE of all taxes, additional fees NOT included

Silver Two Double Bedded Rooms

\$569.00 - (EXCLUSIVE of taxes), single/double occupancy
\$83.93 - NY State/NYC taxes of 14.75% per day
\$3.50 - occupancy tax per day
\$656.43 - INCLUSIVE of all taxes, additional fees NOT included

There WILL now be a one-night option for our group. The best way to make a hotel reservation is to use the link provided above.

You may also call the hotel directly and ask for reservations: (212) 229-2559

Additional details:

There is a limited number of rooms with 2 double beds. If that is your preference, please book as soon as you can. There are significantly more Bronze King rooms.

Be sure to ask for a view if that is important to you. You can have a city view or pool view with no extra cost. Skyline view would be more expensive and a higher rate.

The cut-off date for these rates is 9/23. Your reservation may be canceled up to 2 days before your expected date of arrival.

The default dates are October 20 -28 and include all room types; this gives guests the opportunity to book additional nights or rooms outside the block at the special negotiated rate for SVH. Guests would need to update the dates to either 1 or 2 nights under the contracted nights to see the discounted rate.

Please reach out with any questions or if you encounter any difficulty with your reservation.

Contact Mary Carmody at svhalum@gmail.com

THE FALL GENERAL MEETING

Please join us on Saturday, September 24th at 12:00PM via Zoom for an Alumnae Association business meeting followed by a presentation by guest speaker Elizabeth Duthie, RN, Ph.D., CPPS, FAAN, '72 titled "Patient Safety Science to Achieve Blame Free Nursing Practice". Our website has a direct hyperlink for this meeting, and a postcard will be mailed in early September with details.

Patience, Fortitude, Perseverance



THE OTHER HAND

By Jacqueline Bellacosa Kello, BSN, MFA
Jacqueline Bellacosa Kello has just published "Haven Art 2001–2013", a visual and written record of the community arts space she founded on September 11, 2001 — the same morning the towers fell.

People ask me when I made the leap from nursing to art. The question assumes there was a gap to cross.

There wasn't. I was an artist throughout my nursing career. I had two hands, and they were always both working. It was only the material that changed.

What nursing delivered to the artist was not subject matter alone — though it gave me that in abundance. It gave me the human body itself: its weight, its presence, the professional breaking of taboo — that boundary of sight and touch with the nude — which allowed an intimacy with the body's movements and contours that few ever know. Nearly 7,000 births attended, the body of a laboring woman is not an abstraction. It is heat and effort and surrender and will, all at once. More, working with a patient in psychosis, holding their humanity as their sense of our world of things disintegrates, connecting where possible — that too was an education in what it means to live a human life. You cannot hold that kind of presence, year after year, without it asking something of you.

Art is how I gave the compassion somewhere to be recorded other than a chart.

The empathy required in nursing — real empathy, not sympathy, but the willingness to enter someone else's experience and remain steady there — is the same quality that drives the need to make something. To say: this mattered. This moment of human life deserves more than to pass unwitnessed. Sculpture, poetry, the founding of Haven Art in 2001 — these were not departures from

nursing. They were its continuation by other means.

St. Vincent's trained me to be brave enough to go where I had not been before. The first intramuscular injection. The first night in charge. The first decision to call the doctor at 3 a.m. That same bravery — the willingness to commit, to act, that same courage — to make something where nothing existed — is the same human action needed.

I did not leap from one world to another. Nursing made me a witness to the unmasked human experience. Art is what I did with what I saw.

St. Vincent's prepared me and I am forever grateful for that education.

Forward to the Book:

https://1drv.ms/w/c/57c109cfe9c6f2feIQDI G6gro3T0QbRh3dxE_oFAAfIeTgnrGYRNW2u WLBjeATQ?e=B3GPeL

Link to Images: *(Please note: some of these pictures may cause an emotional response)*
<https://1drv.ms/w/c/57c109cfe9c6f2feIQD SsrGgm9jqQoOa7LkKVYwsARe1HnGs4-4it-NkZUKe5rQ>

The book chronicles years of artmaking, mentorship, and healing on Long Island, and is available through Ingram Spark and online booksellers. ISBN: 979-8-90098-080-5.

PENICILLIN ALLERGIES IN CHILDREN AND THE ELDERLY SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION

By Mary Carmody, '73

Our Spring general meeting was held on April 15, 2026. Our speaker, Dr. Susan Hagan Morrison, MD, '72, gave an eye-opening presentation titled "Penicillin Allergies in Children and the Elderly."

Dr. Morrison spoke about antibiotic stewardship, increased cost-effectiveness, and shared decision-making. She reviewed



hypersensitive reactions and the meaning of anaphylaxis. She stressed the importance of a detailed history.

I encourage you to listen to the recording and review the slides.

<https://www.stvincentsschoolofnursingalums.org/>

There is so much new knowledge about antibiotic use in the 21st Century and how this informs clinical interventions for people who believe that they have a penicillin allergy, but may not have been properly diagnosed.

This has significant implications when other infections occur, as it affects access to the best treatment. An awareness and understanding of this material will be beneficial to us as individuals and also to family members of all ages.

The case studies and vignettes not only demonstrated Dr. Morrison's clinical expertise but also her warmth and compassion for her patients and their families. Dr. Morrison's patients are most fortunate to have such a qualified physician with the heart of a St. Vincent's graduate!

I have included several slides from the presentation below for ease of reference.

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAI) Position Statement: Slide 35

A penicillin allergy evaluation accurately identifies approximately 9 of 10 patients who, despite reporting a history of "penicillin allergy," can receive penicillins without allergic reaction

- Efforts to delabel can and should be performed by all clinicians, especially for those patients with low-risk histories, not limited to those from Allergy and Immunology
- For those clinicians not comfortable performing delabeling procedures, referral

to Allergy and Immunology is an appropriate alternative

- The AAAAI encourages widespread and routine penicillin allergy evaluations, which are integral for successful antibiotic stewardship

Summary: Slide 38

- True prevalence of PCN allergy is much lower than reported and recorded in the electronic medical record
- Most allergic reactions are low-risk and can be delabeled via direct challenge
- Penicillin allergic patients often receive broad spectrum antibiotics which can have more side effects, lower effectiveness and higher cost
- Delabeling penicillin allergy is critical for clinical and health care outcomes

Key Takeaways: Slide 39

- Allergic reactions are a small subset of adverse drug reactions
- If allergy is suspected, a careful drug allergy history is the best next step and can usually help to distinguish between hypersensitivity reactions that are common or severe
- Skin testing and challenges can be performed by allergists to help in diagnosis & management, and challenges in low-risk patients can also be done by non-allergists
- A proactive effort should be made to delabel patients with reported penicillin allergy

GREETINGS FROM ESWATINI

By Dr Al and Kathleen, (nee Maldini) Hart

Dear friends and family,

Compassion is the human response to the suffering of others. In 2003 President Bush started PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.), the single best aid program saving more than 26 million lives so far. We



witnessed the miracle of this compassionate intervention for more than 20 years.

Now due to the cuts to USAID and PEPFAR we are witnessing an increase in suffering and deaths that were preventable just a few short years ago.

The Home Based Palliative Care (HBPC) team in Eswatini has been receiving many more referrals of patients who need end of life care. Cancer is on the rise. Some clinics that dispensed HIV/AIDS medications have been closed and counselling, testing and important exams are no longer available in many rural areas.

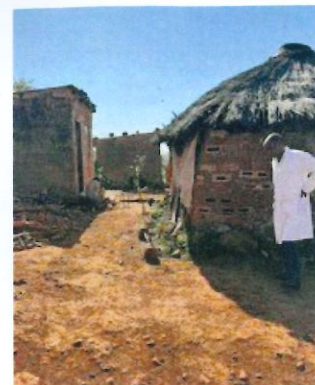
Your generosity has provided the team with medications, food, blankets, mattresses, solar lights and many more comfort interventions bringing hope and knowledge that people still care. Your gifts have funded biopsies, tests, transport to and from hospitals and have helped prolong the lives of many Swazi people.

A young doctor from Minnesota just returned from working with our team. She shared these thoughts:

"My first day with the Palliative Care team was not what I expected. It struck me quickly that palliative care here has unique hurdles. Sometimes caring for a patient means ensuring their families have enough to eat. Sometimes it means convincing



someone to continue HIV/AIDS treatment. Sometimes it means acknowledging the powerful role traditional healers hold in communities while also trying to prevent cancers from progressing untreated until they are no longer curable."



Your compassion makes it possible for the team to care for the sick, feed the hungry, comfort the dying and keep hope alive.

With deep gratitude for your generous contributions,

Al and Kathleen Hartmann and the HBPC Team

Please share our link with anyone who would like to donate. Siyabonga kakhulu (thank you very much): <https://cmmb.org/hartmann>

CLASS NOTES

Are you interested in getting to know your fellow graduates and make good use of your leisure time? Consider joining an Alumnae Association committee and see what we are all about. We meet every other month on a Wednesday evening at 7:30PM via Zoom. Bring your talent, interest or just a cup of coffee or cocktail and learn what we do when we are not hosting a general meeting. I promise new friends will be made and you will have a lot of laughs along the way. Contact us at svhalum@gmail.com and someone will call you directly with more information.

Do you have any old photos from nursing school or reunions that you wish to share? Reach out to svhalum@gmail.com and we can help you get them posted in future newsletters. Add names of people in pictures with year.

REMINDER: NO PATIENT PHOTOS.

Faith, Hope and Charity



Class Of 1967

Anyone interested in a 60th Anniversary get-together in Florida in 2027? Please contact Mary Ryan Effinger at maryryanfl@gmail.com or Jane Schroeder at janiejanept@gmail.com

Thank you,
Mary and Jane

Class of 1976

Calling all members of the Class of 1976!

The Class of 1976 will be celebrating their golden anniversary. Lorraine Fisher and Peggy Symon Soufer have volunteered to organize the celebration. They may be contacted at:

- Lorraine Fisher - lorrainefisher350@outlook.com
- Peggy Soufer - psoufer@gmail.com

ATTENTION ALUMNI

Dues:

We wish to remind everyone to pay their Annual Alumni Dues. We ask that your dues be paid as soon as possible. Dues can be paid on the SVH website: stvincentsschoolofnursingalums.org or by mailing to Pat Costello. If you have an issue let Pat Costello know.

Capes:

The Alumni Association is looking for capes. Anyone wanting to move their cape along to another member who is looking for one, please get in touch with Pat Costello at: pcostellosvh@gmail.com.

Caps:

Caps can be purchased from Kay's Caps. They are \$24.50 plus shipping

Go to info@kayscap.com phone 516 791-8500

Transcripts:

Information about transcripts can be found on our website:
stvincentsschoolofnursingalums.org

CLASS NOTES:

Please keep in touch with us by sending us your class year and email address to SVHalum@gmail.com. Alum frequently request information about their classmates, particularly to reconnect for reunions.

WEBSITE:

Please visit the site for review of Class Notes, Photo Gallery, and more.

stvincentsschoolofnursingalums.org



NEWSLETTER STAFF

Kathie Shea Contello, '74 - Editor in Chief

Marilyn Lynaugh Strafer, '80 - Associate

Susan Faggiani, '68 - Associate

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Maureen Garrett McElhinney, '68 - Advisor

SVHalum@gmail.com

Change of Address, Correspondence and Annual Dues of \$50.00

Forward to Mrs. Patricia Costello

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Patience, Fortitude, Perseverance





**St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City
Alumnae Association of the School of Nursing**

96th Annual Mass and Luncheon

Date: October 24th, 2026

Location: The Downtown Dream Hotel

355 West 16th Street (Between 8th and 9th Avenues)
New York, NY

Time: Mass at 11:00AM

Business Meeting to immediately follow

Cocktail Hour: 12:00PM to 1:00PM

Lunch: 1:00PM to 4:00PM (*Open Bar will close at 3:00PM*)

Cost: \$150/per person (reservations are non-refundable)

Reservations will be accepted starting on 8/3/26

Reservation Deadline is September 18th, 2026

Payment may be mailed to Patricia Costello via check with enclosed response card or may be paid online using a credit card or PayPal for a nominal fee. Please state whom you wish to be seated with when registering.

<https://www.stvincentsschoolofnursingalums.org>



Faith, Hope and Charity



ETERNAL REST

GRANT UNTO THEM O LORD

Sarah (Sally) Solan '62

Virginia McGonegal Martin '65

Richard Bauer, husband of Dianne Gademan Bauer '57

Vincent Fitzell, husband of Ann Flechaus Fitzell '64

John Petrie, husband of Therese Hamilton Petrie '64

John Hudson Dilgen, grandson of Catherine McDonald Purpura '66
and nephew of Amy Purpura Smith '96

Ben Mallinger, son of Kathleen Murphy Mallinger '66

Kenneth Joseph Henry, son of Joanne Lauria Henry '67

Thomas Garrett brother of Maureen Garrett McElhinney '68

Raymond Burke, brother of Nancy Burke '72

Noreen E. Mulvaney, sister of Marguerite Mulvaney Donnery '73

Maureen Rose Traynor, sister of Margaret Reilly Breig '86

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