LETTER: Tribute to nurses for National Nurses Week

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Carol Kellogg (Nathaniel Witherell), Deb Travers (Greenwich Department of Health), First Selectman Peter Tesei, Stephanie Paulmeno (Executive Board of the Ct Nurses Association & CEO of Greenwich-based Global Health Systems Consultants, Nancy Tar (the Mews), Carol Burns (River House), Barbara Bonfiglio (The new Director of Nurses at Greenwich Woods), Gloria Mackey (Nathaniel Witherell) and Victoria Sybelnik (Sterling Care Home Care Agency).

National Nurses Week is May 6-12. The American Nurses Association and its State Nurses’ Association affiliates sponsor this event every year in order to raise public awareness about the critical value of nursing to health, wellness and public health endeavors. It informs the public about the vital and varied roles registered nurses have in meeting the health care needs of our culturally diverse American population.

This year’s theme was Ethical Practice; Quality Care. It is not by mere chance that nurses have come out on Gallup Poll surveys every year as the most honest and ethical professionals, surpassing the ratings of doctors, lawyers, judges, clergy, teachers and many more, with the one exception to this being in 2001, the year of the 9/11 tragedy, when fireman took the top spot.
To celebrate National Nurses Week, First Selectman Peter Tesei paid tribute to the registered nurses of Greenwich at a ceremony held May 12 at Town Hall by issuing a Proclamation honoring them.

If saving lives is the measure of a hero, nurses are heroes every day! If improving lives, quality of lives, and health are measures of excellence, nurses excel every day. Nurses are at your side when you’re born, when you’re ill, and when you’re dying. Nurses wear many different hats, but you will find them everywhere; in offices, health care facilities and in your home; you’ll find them in corporate settings, on Boards and Commissions, in parishes and in private and independent practices; you’ll find them in schools, as professors in colleges, in elected offices, engaged in research and as entrepreneurs in their own businesses.

The May 12 proclamation event was organized by Stephanie Paulmeno, an executive board member of the Connecticut Nurses’ Association. She invited executive nurses from every health care facility in Greenwich to represent their nurses and to join her in accepting the Selectman’s Proclamation.

They included nurse administrators Carol Kellogg and Gloria Mackey of Nathaniel Witherell, Deb Travers, Director of Family Health from the Greenwich Department of Health, Stephanie Paulmeno, CEO of Global Health Systems Consultants, Nancy Tar, a nurse at the Mews, Carol Burns, Executive Director of River House, Barbara Bonfiglio, Director of Nurses at Greenwich Woods, and Victoria Sybelnik of Sterling Care Home Care, a licensed accredited and certified home care agency.

Each nurse was presented with a single rose bouquet and chocolate truffles by Stephanie Paulmeno, on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses Association, to thank them for their service, their selfless dedication, and for devoting themselves to a profession that has long emphasized ethical practice and quality care.

In Connecticut, one in 59 people is a nurse. There are nearly 3.1 million registered nurses in the U.S. These nurses provide highly skilled, often specialized nursing services in a variety of settings. While delivering quality health care faces many challenges, nurses persevere, as they always have, in their professional and ethical commitment to deliver essential health care despite budget and personnel cuts. Few people understand the depth and breadth of the knowledge and professional skills underlying the performance of a nurse’s duties and scope of practice. Unlike many other professionals, nurses rarely get acknowledged for what they do every day.

Visit the Connecticut Nurses’ Association at www.ctnurses.org to learn more about nurses and about nursing as a profession. Nurses are urged to join the Connecticut Nurses’ Association and to consider getting the Connecticut special nursing license plate as a source of professional pride.

Stephanie Paulmeno, CEO of Global Health Systems Consultants