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## LOCAL NEWS

### Broadcasting a new image for nursing

By Chris Helms / Townsman Correspondent  
Thursday, May 20, 2009

Holistic health advocate, Georgianna Donadio aims to inspire nurses to get back in touch with their patients and recharge their own batteries.

Donadio, founder of the Wellesley-based New England School of Whole Health Education, is the force behind nurseradio.org, a Web site featuring interviews with nurses.

"We play a role in celebrating nursing," said Donadio, who conducts the interviews.

The site has been up since early May. It includes 20 interviews with nurses whose stories Donadio finds inspirational. For instance, Donadio talks with Kathy Duffy, who works with the victims of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, and Deva-Marie Beck, a scholar who writes about nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale. The plan is to add a new interview every week.

"It's about meaningful work," Donadio said from her Cameron Place office. "We're starting to forget why we went into health care. We're trying to 'regroup the tribe.'"

Nursing has a reputation of suffering from a high "burnout factor," according to Jeanne Crawford, executive director of the American Holistic Nurses' Association in Flagstaff, Ariz. Crawford said it might help morale for nurses to hear about the lives and accomplishments of other nurses.

"We really encourage nurses to be very nurturing of themselves, to look at themselves in that same body/mind/spirit way," Crawford said.

The idea of connections between the body, mind and spirit is central to the practice of holistic nursing. Donadio said nurseradio.org grew out of a program developed at her school, the Whole Health Educator certification program for Nurses, endorsed by the American Holistic Nurses Association.

"We developed a program for nurses designed to invite the nurse back into more relationship-centered, whole-person interaction, a patient education oriented program. It's a way of giving the bigger picture from an evidence-based but spiritual relationship centered perspective," she said.

Crawford said nurses using holistic methods pay special attention to non-medical aspects of their patients, such as family background, in an effort to treat the whole person instead of treating illness alone.

Donadio brings a media as well as a medical background to the nurseradio.org project. For 17 years, she has hosted "Woman to Woman," a syndicated talk show that appears on Boston Catholic Television. The show explores and celebrates women's spirituality.

Donadio founded the school in 1977 in Boston. She moved the school to Wellesley four years ago. Classes are conducted at the New England Medical Center.

Asked about her goals for the nurseradio.org site, Donadio said she hopes it increases the visibility of "whole health" approaches to nursing.

"People will be a lot more aware that there is such a thing as holistic nursing," Donadio said. "That's an important goal."

Visiting the Web site is free. It is supported by advertisers, including Partners Home Care, the Mind/Body Medical Institute in Chestnut Hill and Thomson Delmar Learning, a textbook company.

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Georgianna Donadio in her Wellesley office. - Photo By Zara Tzaney

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