National Nurses Week begins each year on May 6 and ends on May 12, Florence Nightingale’s birthday. These permanent dates enhance planning and position National Nurses Week as an established recognition event. As of 1999, May 8 was designated as National Student Nurses Day, to be celebrated annually. And as of 2003, National School Nurse Day is celebrated on the Wednesday within National Nurses Week each year.

The nursing profession has been supported and promoted by the American Nurses Association (ANA) since 1896. Each of ANA’s state and territorial nurses associations, other organizations, rallied to support the contributions that nurses and nursing make to the community.

The ANA supports and encourages National Nurses Week recognition programs and activities, promotes the nursing profession, supports nurses associations, other organizations, and nursing associations, educational facilities, and independent health care companies and institutions.

A Brief History of Na-
tional Nurses Week
1933—Dorothea Suther-
land of the U.S. Department
of Health, Education, and
Welfare sent a proposal to
President Eisenhower to
proclaim a “Nurse Day” in
October of the following
year. The proclamation was
never made.

1954—“National Nurse
Week” was observed from
October 11 – 16. The year
of the observance marked the
100th anniversary of Florence Nightingale’s mis-
tions to Crimea. Represen-
tative Frances P. Bolton spon-
sored the bill for a nurse
week. Apparently, a bill for
a “National Nurse Week”
was introduced in the 1955
Congress, but no action was
taken. Congress discontin-
ued its practice of joint res-
olutions for national weeks
of various kinds.

1959—The Wednesday
within National Nurses
Week was designated as
“National Nurse
Day.” Edward Scanlan, of
Red Bank, N.J., took up
the cause to perpetuate the
practice of recognizing nurses in his
state. Mr. Scanlan had this
date listed in Chase’s Cal-
endar of Annual Events. He
promoted the celebration on
his own.

1981—AANA, along
with various nursing orga-
nizations, rallied to sup-
port a resolution initiated
by nurses in New Mexico,
through their Congressman,
Manuel Lujan, to have May
6, 1982, established as “Na-
tional Recognition Day
for Nurses.”

1982—In February,
the ANA Board of Direc-
tors formally acknowledged
May 6, 1982, as “Na-
tional Nurses Week.” The action af-
firmed a joint resolution of
the United States Congress
designating May 6 as “Na-
tional Recognition Day
for Nurses.”

1983—Of all the bills
introduced during the 98th
Congress, the one in support
of the observance marked the
100th anniversary of Florence
Nightingale. Since 1965, the ICN has cel-
brated “International Nurse
Day.”

1974—In May of
that year, a week was des-
ignated by the White House
as “National Nurse Week,”
and President Nixon issued
a proclamation.

1975—New Jersey
Governor Brendan Byrne
declared May 6 as “Nurses
Day.”

1990—The ANA Board
of Directors expanded the
recognition of nurses to a
week-long celebration, de-
claring May 6 to 12, 1991, as
“National Nurses Week.”

1993—The ANA Board
of Directors, at the request
of the ANA Board of Direc-
tors, designated May 6 to 12 as permanent
dates to observe “National Nurses Week” in 1994 and in all subsequent years.

1996—The ANA initi-
ated “National RN Recogni-
tion Day,” to honor the nation’s in-
dispensable registered nurses for their tire-
less commitment to the health and well-being of all people. The ANA encour-
gages its state and territorial nurses as-
sociations and other organizations to ac-
knowledge this special day.

1997—The ANA Board
of Directors, at the re-
quest of the National Student Nurses Association, designated May 8 as “National Student Nurses Day.”

Florence Nightingale Pledge
I solemnly pledge myself before God and in the presence of this assembly, to pass my life in purity and to practice my profession faithfully. I will abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischie-
vous to human health and will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug. I will do all in my power to maintain and elevate the standard of my profession, and will hold in confidence all personal matters committed to my keeping and all fam-
ily affairs entering into my knowledge in the practice of my calling. With loyalty I will endeavor to aid the physician in his work, and devote myself to the wel-
fare of those committed to my care.

What do nurses do?

Registered Nurses
 Responsibilities:
 • Perform physical and health histories
 • Provide health promotion, counsel-
ing and education
 • Administer medications, wound care, and numerous other personalized interventions
 • Interpret patient information and make critical decisions about needed ac-
cions
 • Coordinate care, in collaboration with a wide array of health profes-
sionals
 • Direct and supervise care delivered by other health care personnel like LPNs

Settings:
 • Inpatient settings, e.g. acute care, surgical, geriatric, and pediatrics
 • Ambulatory centers, e.g. urgent care, walk-in clinics
 • Home health care
 • Long-term care
 • International settings

Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN): A nurse who has completed a nurse education program and is licensed in an advanced practice role. APRNs: RN, APRN, or DNP in a variety of settings.

We appreciate all of our wonderful nurses!

Content found at http://www.nursingworld.org
Nurses are often the first people patients see when visiting hospitals. According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources Services Administration, there were 2.8 million registered nurses, including advanced practice RNs, and 690,000 licensed practical nurses, or LPNs, in the United States between the years of 2008 and 2010.

Nurses fill many roles in the medical community, assisting doctors and helping to make in-patient stays more comfortable for men and women who are ill or injured. Specialized nurses, such as nurse practitioners, may even serve as the primary healthcare provider, offering diagnoses and writing prescriptions.

While there is a specific week set aside to show appreciation to nurses, many people agree that they deserve recognition throughout the year. Any instance is a good time to give back to nurses, and the following are a few ways to honor the nurses in your life.

• Play caretaker to him or her. Nurses tend to the needs of others all the time, but some nurses do not get the respite they deserve. Those who want to show appreciation to a nurse who has helped them in their lives can present the nurse with a gift card for a massage and soothing spa treatment.

• Cater a meal. Offer to cater a meal at the hospital or medical office so that all nurses on staff can benefit. If there is one nurse in particular you want to treat, give that nurse a gift card to a nearby restaurant.

• Provide foot relief. Nurses spend hours on their feet, and that can cause pain or stiffness throughout the body. Present a gift card to a store that specializes in comfort shoes or custom orthotics. A certificate for a pedicure or foot massage would no doubt be appreciated as well.

• Create a charmed existence. Charm bracelets are the rage right now, and nurses may appreciate a bracelet that highlights their career path with specific charms. For something they can wear on the job, treat nurses to a Steth-o-Charm®, which is a charm that slides securely onto stethoscopes. These charms come in many designs and can make for a memorable gift.

• Give a decorative badge reel. Nurses must wear identification or have swipe cards on their person to gain access to areas of hospitals. Many badges are standard items without any flare or style. A colorful or decorative badge reel can be a nice way to brighten up a nurse’s day.

• Give verbal or handwritten thanks. One of the easiest and most heartfelt ways to show your appreciation to nurses is to simply tell them how you feel. Offer a handwritten note or speak with a nurse in person. Such a simple gesture does not take much effort, but it is bound to make an impact.

It’s National Nurses Week, and we want to tell all the dedicated nurses on our staff just how much we care about the great job they do caring for our residents day after day.

The Crossing at Malvern
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thecrossingatmalvern.com

Thank you to all our caring nurses!
Malvern Operations, LLC
Arbor Oaks
Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center
105 Russellville Rd, Malvern, AR
tel 501-332-5251 • fax 501-337-9354

Thank you! for all you do!
DeAnn Rogers & Sarah Ray
Glen Rose School District

How to show a nurse you care

The Crossing’s Shea Plemmons (left) and Director of Care Gina Fonte. (Photo by Mi Vaughn)

Arbor Oaks nursing staff pose for National Nurses Week. (Photo by Mi Vaughn)