

# Presidents Message January 2012

Greetings and Happy New Year to all;

I hope that you all celebrated the holidays in a special way, and that your New Year's Resolutions include being more active in your professional organization.

This message will serve as the President's Message along with a Convention Update. We hope that you will make plans to attend the convention in 2012.

The next **NYSSMA Executive Board meeting** will be held at the Ramada Inn (Syracuse) on Saturday & Sunday, **January 21 & 22, 2012**. The NYSSMA Board meetings are open to all members (at your expense). If there is an issue or activity you would like us to discuss, please contact me anytime prior to the scheduled meeting. Reports were due by 12/15. There are still some that have not been sent in, please do so as soon as possible so that they can be included with the others. If you are planning to attend this meeting, please let me know. The room rate is \$92 plus tax. There is a menu for your lunch selection that I can email to you. We pre-order our lunch to save time. ([paulagcma@aol.com](mailto:paulagcma@aol.com))

Preparations for the **53<sup>rd</sup> Annual NYSSMA Convention** continue. The members of Onondaga Chapter are once again, happy to be your host. We have planned 12 CEUs for the weekend. The date is **April 12-15** at the Ramada Inn (Syracuse). Complete details will be available on our web site and in the next issue of *NYSSMA Today*. Each year, we are fortunate to have a member of the AAMA Board of Trustees attend as our AAMA representative. Our AAMA representative for this meeting will be Patricia Hightower, CMA (AAMA) from Kent, Washington. This is a great opportunity to meet a AAMA Leader. You will have several opportunities to hear and speak to Patricia. There will be educators coffee hours and the educator round table luncheon. The theme for this convention is:

**CMA-The Health Care Hero  
Presents  
Your Passport to Professionalism**

Costumes for the Welcome Party are optional—Come as your favorite super hero. We start our educational sessions on Thursday with a program on *Elder Abuse*, followed by the pre-convention meeting (which is open to all and you are encouraged to attend), *Secret Words—Medical Terminology with a Twist* and a light supper will follow. We will hear from Patricia after that.

On Friday: the day begins with an Educators Coffee Hour. The General Assembly is open to all and it is your chance to participate in the business of the state society. We'll have a couple of opportunities to hear from our AAMA representative. After lunch, we will hear presentations on *Organ Donation; Epidermolysis Bullosa; Practice Management; Face Book and the Informational Age* and then its time for the Welcome Party.

On Saturday, we will have another Educators Coffee Hour and the Educators Roundtable Luncheon. These are great opportunities to network with other educators. Topics include: *Electronic Medical Records; Health Implications of Unconventional Natural Gas; The Professionalism of CMAs: The Key to Affordable Healthcare; Risks for Documentation-Patient Portals & Risks of Email Communication & Social Networking; West Nile Virus, SARS & Other Communicable Diseases; Analog to Dialog & Parkinson's Disease*. The evening continues with the Presidents' Banquet (Installation of new officers), and the President's Reception follows. The convention concludes on Sunday with the post convention meeting (which is open to all) and the breakfast buffet. The cost of the convention is a great deal. We have

not raised the registration fee for a few years, and you get a meal on Thursday, 2 meals on Friday, 2 breaks on Friday, 2 meals on Saturday, 2 breaks on Saturday, and a Buffet on Sunday. Each overnight guest gets a breakfast coupon from the hotel for each night's stay. The rooms have a refrigerator and microwave. The hotel cost has increased by \$1 and it is \$93 + tax.

Our incoming president, Susan Vetter, BS, CMA (AAMA) (Monroe Chapter) will be looking for volunteers to chair and work on committees. If you are interested in serving, you can contact Sue at [vetterstax@hotmail.com](mailto:vetterstax@hotmail.com).

**Convention Cause(s):** Each year, our generous caring attendees bring something for the chosen cause in the convention site location. This year, you can **be an April Angel** and help two causes with very simple things. We ask that you collect soda can tabs for the *Ronald McDonald House*. Ask your offices to participate too—this is a simple way for RMHC to raise funds for the wonderful work they do. If your chapter would like a “house” to put the tabs in, please let me know. Our second cause is *Camp Good Days & Fun Times*. Many people don't realize that this organization offers programs for the families of children with cancer and for women. They hold a *Night of Gratitude* for a group called the *Sassy Survivors*. At the end of October they hold this event and women have the opportunity to shine a light on themselves and others that have helped them through the journey of cancer. We are asking that you bring some pretty candles that these brave women can light the night with.

**Convention Journal Ad:** We hope you will consider asking your employer; reps that you see; your school; and companies you deal with, to support NYSSMA with an ad in the journal. You can support us with a business card, as a patron, sponsor or booster. The form will be on the web site and was in the recent *NYSSMA Today*.

**Welcome New Members:** If you haven't heard from our membership committee yet or the chapter president (where there is one), please let me know. We want to be sure that you have contact with members in your area as soon as possible.

**Congratulations New CMAs:** You may hear that it doesn't matter if you're certified but hopefully it will some day soon. When legislation (regarding our scope of practice) gets passed, you will be able to do the things you have learned. Your help is always needed on the Public Affairs Committee. New CMAs should have heard from Ruth Lewis, BS, CPC, CMA (AAMA) (Membership committee). If you haven't please let me know. However, if you just took the examination, we may not have your contact information from AAMA yet. Now that you're certified, you can begin to earn the necessary 60 CEUs for your mandatory recertification. I hope you'll plan to attend some (or all) of the convention or an upcoming seminar.

**Education Committee:** Has held seminars in the Poughkeepsie area, Capital District area and in Broome County. These areas were selected because there are members in the region but little or no activity for our members.

**Poughkeepsie-** There were several requests to start a chapter in Dutchess County. Since the members in that county could be members of the Ulster Chapter, we have not moved ahead with starting another chapter. It was suggested to those interested in a chapter---that they function under the Ulster Chapter name until we see that there is enough interest and members willing to be leaders. To date, there have been several emails to those that attended the seminar, but no active or associate member has come forth to be a leader. We will try another seminar in the region next year. A meeting room at Ridley Lowell Institute has been offered.

The seminar in the **Capital District** needed to be held on a Friday which limited the number of members that were able to attend during work hours. Capital District has one officer and a few members that attend events, but it is at risk of being disbanded in the next year if others don't come forward to take on leadership roles. Securing a meeting location is another issue for this chapter.

The seminar for **Broome County** was held in a meeting room of a local hospital in Johnson City. The area has no lack of meeting space, but does lack leaders. Currently there is one officer for this chapter. There has been dialogue, and

emails sent to the members of this large chapter asking members to take on leadership roles and to get involved. The most recent email advised members that without leaders, this chapter would also disband. There has been no response from anyone in the chapter. The NYSSMA Executive Board agreed to present another seminar in the area for the spring, and if there is no interest, the chapter will fold and the members will become members-at-large.

**The Annual NYC Seminar** is scheduled for Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup> at the ASA Institute. This is a great opportunity for our down state members (with and without a chapter) to get together, network and earn 4 CEUs. We would love to have a chapter in the region for the many members-at-large, but there is a similar situation---no one wants to be a leader.

**Marketing & Membership:** This is something that we (chapters) can all do to help NYSSMA. Chapter Presidents—go to the AAMA web site and order informational material to send to local offices; bring to health fairs; and put packets together for students. If your chapter's membership committee has had some success in recruiting new members, let me know what is working for your chapter so we can share it with other chapters. For several years I have had a vision of these two committees working together to promote our organization; get students involved early, and keep their interest; reach out to members that don't renew their membership; and to recruit new members. Bring information with you to your own physician appointments and share AAMA with the office staff. I have a friend that sees several physicians, and always asks the staff if they are members. More times than not, they are not and don't know anything about us. She gives them my card along with some info. (Marketing-Joann Fisher [flutterbye117@yahoo.com](mailto:flutterbye117@yahoo.com) & Membership-Todd Lasher [tklasher@verizon.net](mailto:tklasher@verizon.net) )

**Public Affairs:** I haven't heard from any members in recent months. If you have a situation in which duties that you have done in the past have been taken away (because of a letter from your physician's malpractice insurance company or a seminar that a manager has attended) please let me know. There are great documents on our web site for your use. ([paulagcma@aol.com](mailto:paulagcma@aol.com))

**Resolutions:** The chairperson has extended the deadline for submission of resolutions to January 31, 2012. Individual members and chapters are encouraged to submit a resolution for discussion in the General Assembly. Please contact Chairman Kaye Foit with any questions. ([bradley14@roadrunner.com](mailto:bradley14@roadrunner.com) )

**Strategic Plan:** We encourage all members to voice your opinion on plans for the future of this society. Major goals include Marketing & Membership, Public Affairs; Structure of future meetings and Communication to our members. ([paulagcma@aol.com](mailto:paulagcma@aol.com) )

**Awards:** We have the **Publication Award** for Chapter Newsletters, notices, brochures etc. We also have the **NYSSMA Professional Leadership Award** (in which you must be nominated by your chapter or another member) and have the **Professional Achievement Award**- which many of you do qualify for. Be sure to look at the qualifications on our web site. You can contact Chairman Mary Schmelzer with any questions. ([gobills27@roadrunner.com](mailto:gobills27@roadrunner.com))

Educators—please be sure to tell your students about the **Dorothy Ross Scholarship Award**. Details have been mailed to educators and can be found on the web site as well. The web site also has the application, instructions and deadlines. ([dhlfdamon@verizon.net](mailto:dhlfdamon@verizon.net))

**Historian:** It seems as though many of us are downsizing or trying to get out from under mountains of paper. If you have any historical information about NYSSMA that you no longer want to keep, please get it to our Historian or bring them to the convention. Pictures are welcome. ([dhlfdamon@verizon.net](mailto:dhlfdamon@verizon.net) )

**NYSSMA Today:** The most recent issue has been received. If you have not received it, please notify the Editor to be sure you are on the list correctly. The next issue will have convention details (which are also be on the web site). ([lynnaugie@yahoo.com](mailto:lynnaugie@yahoo.com) )

**Policy & Procedures:** This comprehensive document has been revised and is ready for use. If you would like to work on a committee next year—this will be of help to you. {Carrie Gravelle ([gravelle4@aol.com](mailto:gravelle4@aol.com)) or Jan Caplan ([caplanjanice@hotmail.com](mailto:caplanjanice@hotmail.com)) }

**Project Outreach:** Is an ad hoc committee whose mission is to find other ways to get our younger medical assistants involved. We are looking to technology to accomplish this as well. “Like” us on **Face Book**. (Mark Lasek is the Chairman. [mlasek@bryantstratton.edu](mailto:mlasek@bryantstratton.edu) )

**Nominations:** I should have put this at the top of the list. This is our most important committee. The task of this committee is to find members that would like to run for office next year. To date, we have no one that wants to serve on the NYSSMA Board except our incoming president. (The Chairman is Carrie Gravelle-- [Gravelle4@aol.com](mailto:Gravelle4@aol.com) )

**2013 Convention:** There is much to discuss with a little window of opportunity to do so. Some members would like to see the convention shortened to 2 days, while others don't feel it is possible. A two day convention would limit the amount of CEUs one could earn, although some may be able to attend because it is shortened. A pre- and post meeting would still be necessary but the board could meet anytime, but would not have the input of interested members. A date needs to be decided along with a location. This will have to be an item on the January agenda, and your ideas are appreciated. *Please email me your thoughts and suggestions. This will be your meeting—help us plan it.*

#### **Chapter Updates:**

**Capital District Chapter** is in jeopardy of folding. Very few members attend the monthly meetings. I urge members of this chapter to contact your president to see what you can do to help. Low attendance and a meeting location continue to be a problem. There is currently only one officer. This chapter has become home to those chapters in their area that have dissolved. There is one accredited program in the area. (President Lee Damon [dhlfdamon@verizon.net](mailto:dhlfdamon@verizon.net) )

**Broome Chapter** is in the same situation. There is only one officer. There are three schools in the area, with many students becoming CMAs. The lack of leadership and member involvement are the problems. Members do attend NYSSMA seminars in the region. The NYSSMA Education committee will give it another try in the spring. If you are a member of this chapter, please think about being a leader. It doesn't have to take a huge chunk of your time and life to be a leader, and there are many of us that are willing to help. This chapter could also benefit from quarterly meetings, but will need volunteers to put the programs together. ([paulagcma@aol.com](mailto:paulagcma@aol.com) –contact person)

**Erie Chapter** continues to thrive. They have monthly board meetings, and then they have a general membership meeting with a speaker. They also have several schools in the area that could be more involved. Educator Kaye Foit and Erie's VP Marie LeVine held a student seminar that was very well attended. They offered information on Writing Resumes and had a speaker on interviews. They have their annual seminar planned for March 24<sup>th</sup> and will offer a full day of education. (Cheryl Kaczoeowski is the chapter president [purple364@hotmail.com](mailto:purple364@hotmail.com) )

**Finger Lakes Chapter** has hopes for a revival. There are a few interested members that want to make it work. We have appointed Melissa Cole as the VP/Secretary; and educators Rebecca Griffin and Ruth Brown are willing to help put a seminar together. We hope that the seminar will motivate other members to get involved. (Sherry Mulhollen [smulhollen@hotmail.com](mailto:smulhollen@hotmail.com) and Lissa Cole [lcole01@yahoo.com](mailto:lcole01@yahoo.com) )

**Monroe Chapter** has found a successful way of meeting and providing continuing education. They offer 3 speakers a few times a year on a Saturday morning. The chapter provides a continental breakfast and charges a nominal fee. They are able to pay for postage with the income. In addition, they continue to have a monthly board meeting (which is open to any interested member) and use this time to plan chapter activities. They have two schools in this area and have had their seminars at both of the schools. What a great way to reach more students. (Karen Parysek- [kcparysek@bryantstratton.edu](mailto:kcparysek@bryantstratton.edu))

**Nassau Chapter** continues to have monthly meetings, and held their Installation of Officers in December.

**Onondaga Chapter** continues to meet monthly for educational sessions. There is a seminar planned for January 28<sup>th</sup> with 5 CEUs. Many of the meetings are held at Bryant & Stratton. Other locations are the library and the meeting rooms at Denny's Restaurant. ([paulagcma@aol.com](mailto:paulagcma@aol.com))

**Ulster Chapter** has not been totally lost. The charter remains in place, while the students and members in the region try to work out plans, and get active or associate members interested in being leaders. There is one school in the region and they have offered meeting space. (contact [paulagcma@aol.com](mailto:paulagcma@aol.com) )

**Chapters**—if you are concerned about scheduling a meeting and having only a few people in attendance for the winter months—why not have one of your members do a presentation on something they do in their offices, or have one of your educators do a presentation, and you can build up the attendance and then begin to ask for outside presenters.

**Leaders:** you can find several descriptions of a leader, and a few can pertain to all of you.

“A leader guides or directs a group, and a leader influences a group of people towards an achievement of goals.” You can all be leaders. If you have never been a leader (officer or committee chair) for your chapter, give it a try and those of you that have served your chapter for many years, please think about sharing your talents on the state level.

**Members at Large:** You are not forgotten. We would love to have a chapter for you but need members like you to become leaders. We need you to set up educational sessions and we'd like to have you join us for the convention. You have a voice in the General Assembly.

***Students are the future of the profession and the future of this society  
Educators, please encourage your students to become involved. They can become involved during their first semester—no need to wait until they are doing their internship. The CMA credential may not seem necessary to some now, but they should plan to be ready when we are successful in gaining recognition and having a wider scope of practice. You can lead by example. Remind your students that this credential can travel with them—and in some states, they will be allowed to do much more.  
Chapters—get the student members working on committees with veteran members as mentors,***

Happy Birthday to our members celebrating in December and January.

Get Well wishes to our members (or for their family members) in need. If there is a member that should be remembered with a card, please let me know.

Best Wishes for an educational new year. I hope you will join us for the convention—not only can you earn 12 CEUs, you will have networking opportunities and a fun weekend.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

**NYSSMA New Year's Resolutions**

**“Like” Us on Face Book  
Attend a chapter meeting or seminar  
Reach out to chapter members**

**Think about being a leader  
Plan to attend the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention in Syracuse.**

Paula Guidozzoli, CMA (AAMA)  
NYSSMA President