

A6 — The Berkshire Eagle, Tuesday, July 16, 2002

---

# The Berkshire Eagle

Published daily since May 9, 1892, with weekly newspaper roots starting with The Western Star published in Stockbridge beginning December 1, 1789.  
75 South Church St., Pittsfield, MA 01202; Circulation (413) 496-6355 All other departments (413) 447-7311  
Outside local calling area: 1-800-245-0254

**Andrew H. Mick**, *Publisher & President*

**David Scribner**, *Editor*

**Bill Everhart**, *Editorial Page Editor*

**I. Mark Berkowitz**, *Chief Financial Officer*

**Mark A. French**, *Advertising Director*

**James C. Jenkins**, *Circulation Director*

---

## Editorials

---

### In Brief

#### **Nursing shortage a nasty symptom**

Until Americans get thoroughly sick and tired of greedy for-profit corporations running health care, the nation's network of hospitals, clinics and facilities for the elderly will continue its painful process of decline. The latest symptom of the disease is the nursing shortage at local and state hospitals. Statewide, hospitals are short-staffed nearly 10 percent, despite cutbacks in personnel; regionally, Berkshire Medical Center has 6 percent of its nursing positions unfilled. At North Adams Regional Hospital the percentage of open positions is 5 percent, at Fairview in Great Barrington 4 percent. Health care has become a pressure-packed profession, driven more by cost-conscious accountants than by concern for patients' welfare. This is not the way to sustain

a field that is basically a calling. Once again we have evidence of the need for a single-payer health care system.

#### **The arts are not a frill**

In a program at the Lenox Community Center, Debbie and Simon Surowicz engage youngsters aged 3 to 7 in activities designed to engender a comfortable engagement with classical music. Such introductions to the world of the creative imagination do not have to be a summer vacation — and exclusive — opportunity, as the cultural enrichment curriculum at the Richmond Elementary School has shown. The arts are not an educational frill; they give meaning to life, and should be available to every student — especially in America's cultural resort.