



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Message from the President

Opportunities and Possibilities of a New Year...

January/February 2013

Susan Carter, BSN, RN, CPAN, CAPA
ASPAN President 2012-2013

“Take your book full of blank pages and fill it with possibilities.
Create opportunities unique to your life.”

Happy New Year! Are you part of the over 45% of all Americans who made a New Year's resolution?¹ Have you ever wondered where that tradition started? I did, and in doing a bit of research, actually found a definition for New Year's resolution on Wikipedia that is short and sweet. A resolution “is a commitment that a person makes to one or more personal goals, projects, or the reforming of a habit.”² Additionally, the Romans had a huge part in what we know and celebrate today as New Year's.

The tradition of the New Year's resolution goes all the way back to 153 B.C. Janus, a mythical king of early Rome, was placed at the head of the calendar. The Romans named the first month of the year after Janus, the god of beginnings, and the guardian of doors and entrances. He was always depicted with two faces, one on the front of his head, and one on the back. Thus, he could look backward and forward at the same time. At midnight on December 31, the Romans imagined Janus looking back at the old year and forward to the new. Janus became the ancient symbol for resolutions, and many Romans looked for forgiveness from their enemies. They also exchanged gifts before the beginning of each year. The Roman tradition of exchanging gifts on New Year's Eve began by giving one another branches from sacred trees for good fortune. Later, nuts or coins imprinted with the god Janus became more common New Year's gifts.³

The New Year has not always begun on January 1, and even today, there are places in the world where it does not begin on that date. It begins on January 1 only for cultures that use a 365-day solar calendar. January 1 became the beginning of the New Year in 46 B.C., when Julius Caesar developed a calendar that would more accurately reflect the seasons than previous calendars.³

In reading about Janus and the beginning of New Year's traditions, we can all look back at the past year and reflect on successes and achievements. But one of Janus' two faces looks toward the future. The future is a book filled with plain white, blank pages. This book has an outward appearance that is very different for each and every one of us, but inside it is exactly the same. It is empty, and the pages wait for every one of us to fill it with our own unique stories, triumphs, challenges and opportunities. An unknown author once said, “It is better to believe than to disbelieve. In so doing you bring everything to the realm of possibility.” Take your book full of blank pages and fill it with possibilities. Create opportunities unique to your life.

In this issue of *Breathline*, you will find a superb slate of candidates for office. The slate was pulled together by Immediate Past President, Chris Price, and ASPAN Nominating Committee members Connie Hardy-Tabet, Sonia Huff, Debra Morgan, Susan Norris and Charlotte West. This year's candidates for office are individuals, not unlike yourselves, who have made a resolution to advance ASPAN, and in so doing, filling a blank page in their book by having placed their name in candidacy for an elected ASPAN position. They have committed to a personal goal to volunteer their skills, knowledge and time to serving you, the perianesthesia nurse. They are exploring the realm of future possibility. But the candidates need you to also make a resolution, by committing to taking the time to get to know them. Read what they have written regarding their goals and reasons for seeking office. Commit to accessing the Web page and

provide feedback to your component leaders who are tasked with the difficult decision, at ASPAN's Representative Assembly this coming April, of furthering their knowledge of each candidates goals and vision, and of casting the actual votes for ASPAN's next leaders. It is not too late to make a New Year's resolution of your own and take an active part in deciding the future of your society. Odds are, this would be one resolution you can make and actually keep.

One of my very favorite quotes that I have used and relied upon often comes from Mahatma Gandhi. He is quoted as having said, "The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems." It's never too late to commit to something and resolve to make it happen. This year, take the easy step to committing to being a part of ASPAN's future. That way, next year, like Janus, you too can look both forward and backward, and know you had a hand in creating the future of ASPAN.

REFERENCES

1. The d Infographics. Available at: <http://thedinfographics.com/2012/01/06/new-years-resolutions-facts/>. Accessed November 23, 2012.
2. New Year's Resolutions. Available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Year's_resolution Accessed November 23, 2012.
3. Goals Guy. Available at: http://www.goalsguy.com/Events/n_facts.html Accessed November 23, 2012.