



# ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

## Message from the President

### Circles of Influence: Carpe Diem

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**ASPAN President 2003-2004**

As each president before me, I am astonished by how time has flown. Each of us has begun with the vision to make things happen and the determination to meet defined goals for ASPAN. Because of what ASPAN has done for me, first as a nurse and now as a leader, I have remained committed to move the organization forward, keep us at the table and create opportunities to influence nursing practice. As with anything else, the journey cannot be made alone and the end is just the beginning. The beginning must be recognized as steps we have taken along the road to shaping the future of perianesthesia nursing; as the opportunity to move to the next level of accomplishment. We must be prepared to take advantage of the unlimited opportunities available to make the future work for us. Through ASPAN each of us influences how the future of nursing will evolve. The challenges are clearly defined and we have the responsibility to charge ahead and create the ripple that will create the momentum to continue to influence change and the advancement of our specialty.

*Carpe Diem*, seize the day, make the most of every opportunity. In the movie, *The Dead Poet's Society*, Mr. Keating urged his young students, as I now urge you, to make their lives extraordinary. You have the opportunity to be part of the movement and you have an ability to create the occasions for change. You must recognize the power within yourself to make the difference, to be the difference, to become connected and to stretch your boundaries by accepting challenges to "push the limits and serve nursing to the greatest capacity" (Shelander, 2002). Mr. Keating went on by encouraging the students to lean in closer to the display case housing photographs of long since graduated kinsmen and encouraged them to listen closely to their instruction, *Carpe Diem*. Learn from us who have gone before. Your mentors will lead you along new trails to new horizons.

I am not implying that the journey will be easy or that there will be no problems or controversies. Everyday we face difficult issues and I presume we always will. I have found that it is not enough to merely get up every day and go to work. Nursing is exhausting, emotionally draining, and experiencing endless changes. Without a support system a nurse easily and quickly burns out. The support system I suggest includes standards of practice, collegial relationships, continuing education, and specialty certification. For the perianesthesia nurse, ASPAN is our support system. We are fortunate to have the guidance and influence of an extraordinary organization to define and maintain the highest of standards for delivery of safe care.

I ask each of you to reflect on what being a perianesthesia nurse means to you. How did the specialty find you and, better yet, keep you? Once you have identified the passion within, take the next step to involvement, and begin to influence. Create the ripple in the lake that eventually affects the ocean, remembering that you may not even be aware that you have created that ripple. *Carpe Diem!*

ASPAN volunteers have carried this organization to new heights and the vision is to soar higher and higher. The passion and energy all of them have shown, and continue to show, keeps me going and in awe of all that they do. Expand your circle of influence and *seize the day*.