



# ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

## Message from the President

### Perianesthesia Passion: Inspire Excellence by Planning Strategically

*March/April 2016*

**Armi Holcomb, BSN, RN, CPAN**  
**ASPAN President 2015-2016**

Where did this year go? I know this has been said before, but “time flies when you’re having fun!”<sup>1</sup> This has been a great, rewarding year for me as ASPAN’s 35<sup>th</sup> president. It all started in San Antonio, Texas at my induction and the installation of your 2015-2016 ASPAN Board of Directors. As a result of the diligence of the Board, as well as the hundreds of ASPAN volunteer members, our Society has accomplished much this year.

#### **Stewardship**

As I ponder these last few weeks of my presidency, I ask myself if I have been a good steward for ASPAN. The dictionary defines stewardship as “the responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving.”<sup>2</sup> The answer I find is a resounding “Yes!” While there were some challenges from the get-go, there were more successes to celebrate throughout the year. Examples include:

- A well-attended Leadership Development Institute (LDI) in St. Louis
- Publication of the newly revised Redi-Ref for Perianesthesia Practices
- Completion of the Competency Based Orientation and Credentialing Program for the Registered Nurse Caring for the Pediatric Patient in the Perianesthesia Setting
- Completion of research projects on Burn-out and Fatigue. Results will be shared at the 35<sup>th</sup> National Conference
- Productive mid-year board meeting
- Detailed review and revision of the ASPAN Strategic Plan

#### **Service**

ASPAN members can be incredibly gratified by the accomplishments of the Society. With great pride, I can say that there is tremendous excellence in the services we provide because of the support of ASPAN’s many talented volunteers. Vice President/President-Elect Katrina Bickerstaff has been diligently working on the assignments for the 2016-2017 committee, strategic work team and liaison appointments.

It is both humbling and amazing to witness the steady flow of new members wanting to get involved in ASPAN’s work. Talking about work, I must mention a very hardworking group of people, the ASPAN National Office (NO) staff. Trust me when I say that my work as your president would not have been so smooth without the daily support and contributions of the NO staff. Together with Kevin Dill, ASPAN Chief Executive Officer, the national office staff work tirelessly to support the work of ASPAN’s many volunteer leaders.

#### **Strategy**

As stewards for ASPAN, your national Board of Directors tackled the important work of revising ASPAN’s strategic plan. To this end, the ASPAN Board met with Bud Crouch, principal consultant from Tecker International, to update and revise ASPAN’s strategic plan, as he last did in 2010.

Why is a strategic plan important for a nonprofit organization like ASPAN? Strategic planning is the process by which an organization identifies the blueprint necessary to achieve a mission. This strategic plan represents the direction that ASPAN must undertake to move successfully into the future – it is about

identifying what we are not doing today that we need to be doing, and about what we are doing today that needs to be done differently in order to ensure a prosperous future. ASPAN's strategic plan has to remain fluid and viable to be able to give its leaders the direction they need to meet members' needs.

It is the leadership's working document and it is the leadership's responsibility to "change the plan anytime if it needs to be changed based on sound reasoning and assessment, and to update it regularly on an ongoing basis." (Quote: Bud Crouch, 2015.) Strategic planning differs from the daily working plan (operational plan) by providing leadership a strategic direction, the compass, to guide and focus ASPAN's strategic decision making and ongoing operational work.

ASPAN's Core Purpose, to advance and promote the unique specialty of perianesthesia nursing, can be fulfilled if we adhere to and pursue our 'Core Values.' These have been refined to reflect ASPAN's current experience. The revised values are summarized in the acronym P.R.I.D.E. - passion, respect, integrity, diversity, excellence. What is important to know and understand is that your elected board of directors has identified 3-5 year goals, strategies and indicators of achievement so that the Society can realize its future successfully.

### **Looking Back**

While ASPAN's future remains bright, it has indeed been an enjoyable, exciting and great year for me as your president. I was privileged to meet many perianesthesia nurses across the nation and talk one-on-one with some of you. As the first bedside pediatric nurse to be the primary officer for ASPAN, I can relate to the bedside nurses who I met in my travels. Their clinical issues and challenges were mine. Attending other specialty organizations' conferences and meetings was yet another wonderful opportunity to network and meet healthcare partners. One of the best meetings was the Nursing Organizations Alliance conference held last November. It gave me the chance to speak with other nursing leaders in attendance. Some of these organizations are still in their infancy and were very impressed with what ASPAN has been able to accomplish.

### **Conclusion**

As I reflect on what this year has meant to me, I would not have done it any other way. America's 35th president, John F. Kennedy, said at his inauguration: "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country."<sup>3</sup> As ASPAN's 35<sup>th</sup> president, I will paraphrase this line and state, "Ask not what ASPAN can do for you – ask what you can do for ASPAN!" It has been an honor and privilege to have served as your 35<sup>th</sup> ASPAN president. I have given my time, talent and some treasures to ASPAN. Your next leaders will do the same, and I know that ASPAN will be in great hands. "Thank you very much." Or, as we say in the Tagalog language in the Philippines, 'Maraming salamat. Mabuhay!'

### **REFERENCES**

1. The Free Dictionary by Farlex. Time flies when you're having fun. Available at: <http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/time+flies+when+you're+having+fun>. Accessed January 6, 2016.
2. Dictionary.com. Stewardship. Available at: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/stewardship>. Accessed January 11, 2016.
3. Brainy Quote. John F. Kennedy Quotes. Available at: [http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/j/john\\_f\\_Kennedy.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/j/john_f_Kennedy.html). Accessed January 6, 2016.