

What an Experience! 2012 National Conference Report

On return from National Conference last year, Amy Dooley wrote an article entitled 'You Gotta Go!' And so I did. Attending a conference with close to 2,000 fellow nurses who share your passion, experiences and difficulties is invigorating. The opportunity to learn and network is a huge benefit.

My five-day experience began early on Sunday morning with attendance in the gallery of the Representative Assembly (RA). This was a first for me and I didn't know what to expect. Although I'd planned to just 'check it out', I ended up by staying the entire day. Winning final approval was an article to make the Joanne Briggs Institute, a systematic review database, available to the entire membership. This will be a great benefit to anyone who wants to look at evidence that will shape clinical practices. The cost of this will be supported by a \$3 dues increase. Also accepted was an item submitted by a member calling for more transparency in the election process. The low number of members who actually vote for the leadership of ASPAN was highlighted in this discussion. Finally, you will see a position statement/practice recommendation on Obstructive Sleep Apnea when the new 2012-2014 Standards book is published at the end of this year.

Following Monday's opening ceremonies, David Glickman entertained us with his keynote address, "A Dose of Healthcare Humor." A talented and energetic comedian, Mr. Glickman had us all laughing hysterically at his humorous and 'spot on' portrayals of what happens in our workplace with our surgeons, anesthesiologists, patients, management and governing organizations.

Monday afternoon, Tuesday and Wednesday offered many opportunities to listen to talented presenters on a variety of topics. The knowledge they shared often validated my practice as well as opened my eyes to new information. Topics like "It's Time for Discharge: Is your Patient Ready", "Legal Implications in PACU Emergencies", and "When Things Go Wrong: Perianesthesia Complication that Everyone Should Know About" were a great review. Attending CPAN/CAPA review and coaching sessions has energized me to support my colleagues in the pursuit of certification. It was great to hear VT/NH APAN's own Amy Dooley present her talk, "I Love You With All My...Liver?" and to view the poster presentation of fellow VT/NH APAN members Denise Fregault, Sue Lavery, and Cheryl Siebert.

The conference closed on Thursday with another awesome speaker, Jo Manion. In talking about "Strategies of Thriving (not just surviving) in Turbulent Times, she outlined eight key strategies that we can incorporate in our turbulent lives.

While at conference, I volunteered to host daily sessions. This involved collecting tickets, answering questions and wearing the 'green apron.' It provided an added opportunity to meet and network with fellow attendees.

This year, ASPAN awarded 27 scholarships at the national level. I was a fortunate recipient and the \$500 award was very helpful in defraying conference expenses. I returned from conference renewed and motivated. You will too when you join ASPAN in Chicago next year.

Thank you again to ASPAN for awarding me a \$500 scholarship to attend the National Conference in Orlando.

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