

My Experience at the ASPAN National Conference

April 15– 19, 2012

This was my fifth National Conference in 32 years of perianesthesia nursing. I wish I could attend every one as each offers not only a multitude of educational opportunities with excellent and knowledgeable speakers, but also allows time to speak with vendors as they showcase their products in the Exhibitors Hall. Attendance at ASPAN's National Conference also provides a special chance to network with many other perianesthesia nurses. This is a wonderful time to discuss "issues" in perianesthesia practice and ways to improve that practice, and also to make lasting friendships. When I come back home from National Conference and return to work, I feel refreshed, enlightened & motivated.

Some highlights from my week's experience include the following:

- 1) Opening Ceremonies – I kept getting goose bumps at different times during this spectacular opening to our week:
 - as Chris Price introduced the great nurses of ASPAN who have made our practice what it is today
 - during the military recognition and their standing ovation
 - when the large number of first-time attendees stood up
 - I felt extremely fortunate and proud to be involved in PAPAN, as many of our leaders are very involved in ASPAN
- 2) A speaker on that first day told us how, "Nothing will remain the same in health care which makes attendance at national & state events essential to keeping up with change & current trends." How true this is...
- 3) CPAN/CAPA Luncheon – Bryan Townsend highlighted the importance of certified nurses and how they are role models for "making good things happen."
- 4) Development Luncheon – Lois Schick challenged each of us to "get involved."
- 5) I attended many lectures that enlightened me such as Clinical Practice Issues, MH, the Ortho Trauma Patient, Discharge Criteria, Perianesthesia Complications, Lap Surgery Complications, and Legal Issues to name a few. ASPAN speakers are knowledgeable as well as interesting & are experts in their field.
- 6) The sideline conversations with ASPAN leaders were so important to me as they took the time to answer a few questions that I had.

I would like to thank all of my PAPAN friends for their support & encouragement. And, I extend a big THANK YOU to ASPAN for awarding me this scholarship – it really made a difference.

Every perianesthesia nurse should try to attend as many national and state conferences as you can, and get involved with your organization. It is through education & networking that we achieve excellence in our profession.

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