

My Visit to the 38th Annual ASPAN Conference – Nashville

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This year's conference was held at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Conference Center in Nashville, Tennessee. This expansive, yet exotic resort was quite beautiful. It featured a dome-covered courtyard in the center of guest rooms. It had ample retail space for shops and restaurants, which were surrounded by lush gardens and plenty of water: Waterfalls, waterways, and water fountains! A lazy river cruise is available within the dome and next door there is an enormous indoor waterpark! It lacked nothing I could think of.

Denim, Diamonds and Dancing

The festivities began with Component Night. The purpose of this event is to network with other nurses from throughout the country. I could not get over the sheer volume of perianesthesia nurses present, hundreds....perhaps close to two thousand! I was decked out in my rhinestone-studded denim cap and vest. It was a thrill to see nurses in their get ups, getting down! The North Carolina guys and gals were really struttin' their stuff and belting out the best Karioke!

Our Presidents

This past year our esteemed ASPAN President was Regina Hoefner-Notz, who, to my delight is a pediatric perianesthesia nurse and manager. Her management philosophy is Servant Leadership and she makes all nurses feel empowered to be leaders. It was a pleasure to hear from her, she is kind and very entertaining! We were introduced to our new President, Amy Dooley, who has a passion for and dedication to PeriAnesthesia Nursing. I liked being able to see and connect to our ASPAN Board of Directors.

The Lectures

The concurrent lectures available were of a wide variety in practice and topics, and it was difficult to choose from! I chose the ones most related to my employment patient populations. I was able to earn 19.5 Contact Hours. I was delighted to learn more about Parkinsons and Alzheimers Disease. I also attended leadership lectures as my MSN degree is in Leadership/Management. I have favorite lecturers and authors and I sign up for those as well, notably Maureen McLaughlin, Myrna Mamaril, Lois Schick and Terri Passig. Terri Passig and Melissa Davidson are from my home component (Florida) and presented this year, and I love to hear from them! I think it is wonderful that we have so many dedicated scholarly nurses who continue to return, year after year, to provide us with the most up to date perianesthesia education.

The Exhibitors, Research and Best Practice Posters

The exhibition hall had a large amount of vendors, both medical and retail, ranging from stylish stockings to soothing scents. New medical equipment and devices were on display. Some of the biggest medical and pharmaceutical companies like 3M, Stryker, and Mallinckrodt were there. I enjoyed walking around to learn about these products. I took pamphlets and collected cards, so as a vendor liaison, I could network with vendors for my own components' conferences.

There were rows and rows of posters on display, more than any previous conference I have attended. I was particularly interested in the Quick Sequential Organ Failure Assessment (qSOFA) and Bedside Handoff in the PACU. I learned about an interesting project undertaken by nurses to do a "Fast Track Discharge Process for Autism Spectrum Patients". There are so many things in daily practice we can use to further research into EBP and knowledge in Perianesthesia care!

A Very Special CPAN/CAPA Luncheon

The CPAN/CAPA luncheon was a no miss event for me! The food (cornish hen and chocolate mousse) were outstanding. It is always a pleasure to hear from Vicky Yfantis and learn how much our certification numbers are increasing. I am a certification coach so I learn a lot from our ABPANC leaders. Last but not least, was the surprise guest of Honor...Charles Esten! He even performed for us! This fine actor and musician discussed his moving experience with childhood cancer, striking his family and inspiring him to support cancer and other hospitalized patients, through music. He has been a big sponsor of Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, once raising 500,000 in an event. He told us about the organization "Music on call" and their website, musiconcall.org, where anyone can make a referral to send a musician to help the healing of a patient or family in need.

Networking with Other PeriAnesthesia Nurses

There are so many opportunities to network with nurses from throughout the country. Bulletin boards set up in the ballroom area gave information for various groups or components to "meet up" later for a meal or sight- seeing. The Florida group was able to go to the "Grand ol' Opry". We also met for dinner one night at Chuy's. I met and spoke to nurses from California, Oregon and New York. The President's Reception and Component night were great opportunities to mingle.

Hope to See You in Denver!

I look forward to the prospect of signing up for ASPAN's 39th Annual Conference in Denver in 2020. I very much appreciate the opportunity ASPAN has afforded me to attend this conference. I am proud to be a part of one of the largest and best nursing organizations in the country!