

RN NEWS

The Newsletter of the American Radiological Nurses Association
Volume 1 Issue 4

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The Editor's Desk

It seems hard to believe that I am preparing the last issue of RNNews for 1996. It was such a struggle just getting the newsletter started, and now everything has fallen into place.

Speaking of preparing, I hope many of you are getting ready to head out to Chicago for RSNA. I attended my first RSNA/ARNA meeting last November and found it an enlightening experience. The presentations were carried out flawlessly. The speakers, some of which were entertaining, were interesting, informative and educational, (I didn't fall asleep once). The Educational committee deserves a round of applause for the hard work and dedication which they put into making this a meeting worth attending and remembering. So if you were thinking of attending, but haven't quite decided, my vote this December is for Chicago and RSNA/ARNA, they're the winners in my book.

I was pleased and excited by a letter which I received from a Dr. Carson of Conyers, Georgia, in reference to Dr. Lynch's promotion to Brigadier General (vol. 1 issue 2). I was thrilled to find that Physicians are taking the time to read a Nursing newsletter, to see what nurses and their organization are doing. Dr. Carson was certified by the American Board of Radiology in 1972 and the American Board of Nuclear Medicine in 1976. Like Dr. Lynch, but much earlier, Dr. Carson was promoted to Brigadier General with the Georgia Air National Guard in 1984.

Being a former Air Force person myself, I know attaining rank is no easy task, so I salute you Dr. Carson and Dr. Lynch and I hope that Major General is in the future for both of you.

For those who are attending RSNA, have a great time and bring back the information you receive for your fellow nurses.

Articles for the next issue of RNNews should be to me by February 3, 1997. I hope everyone enjoys their holidays and has a safe and happy New Year.

Bob Steel

Silent Auction

It was such a success last year that ARNA is once again having a silent auction to raise money for the Scholarship Fund. The items are donated by each chapter and are on display during the educational seminars. Everyone gets a chance to look at the items and place their bids. Among the auction items last year were a signed print of the St. Louis skyline, Lenox china, and a ladies attaché.

So while you're at the seminars, take a peak and place a bid. Who knows, you may find the Christmas present you were looking for and help raise the money for our Scholarship Fund at the same time! Have fun shopping.

For more information, contact Kate Little, RN. Her (voicemail) number is (919) 996-6641. Her E-mail address is: KLITTLE.rad@mail.unch.unc.edu.

1996 Federal Election Activities

ANA endorsed the Clinton/Gore ticket in June. In addition, ANA President Beverly Malone testified before the Democratic Platform Committee in July. ANA was also a visible presence at both the Democratic and Republican Conventions to help demonstrate that they are a bi-partisan organization.

During a luncheon at the Republican National Convention, ANA President Malone talked about how critical it was that nurses everywhere become more involved in the political process at the local, state, and national levels. At that same luncheon, Rep. Nancy Johnson (R-CT) discussed health care issues and also remarked that in her 14 years in Congress she has noticed an increased visibility of the nursing community on Capitol Hill. She talked about the importance of a strong grassroots network and that more nurses need to be involved in the political process.

On Aug. 26 at the Democratic National Convention ANA helped host the domestic policy forum along with the American Hospital Association and the AFL-CIO. The forum dealt with four subjects, health care, workforce, crime and education, and the environment. ANA President Malone was included in discussions around primary care, health insurance, Medicare, and

Medicaid. The forum was broadcast to three satellite locations.

The ANA and the Illinois Nursing Association sponsored a Patient Safety Rally on Aug. 28 outside the Convention Center during the Democratic Convention. The purpose was to focus attention on quality of care issues. The guest speaker was Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) who is the sponsor of the Patient Safety Act. The Patient Safety Act will be addressed in Congress when the reconvene in Jan. 1997. ANA asks that nurses contact their representatives to co-sponsor and/or support the Patient Safety Act.

Nurse delegates at both conventions had an opportunity to network with members of both political parties and to work to advance nursing's legislative agenda.

NSFNO Meeting

Ginny Clancy, ARNA President, and Ginger Schultz, president-elect attended NSFNO's 23rd annual meeting in San Francisco. NSFNO (National Federation For Speciality Nursing Organizations), established in 1973, now represents 39 specialty nursing groups and 400,000 registered nurses. ARNA is a member and supports their mission to promote specialty nursing practice through collaborative and educational efforts.

At the Presidents Forum and Tea, member Presidents

introduced themselves and stated the major accomplishments each of their organizations had achieved over the past year.

The first general session was a panel discussion surrounding the Pew Reports on health care regulation. The panel discussed how these recommendations can affect our profession. Both of the Pew reports challenge nurses to look at regulatory systems of nursing, competency assessment and realistic approaches to measuring quality of individuals and outcome measurement.

NSFNO has four focus groups that serve member interests:

1. Health policy
2. Research
3. Education
4. Practice.

Meetings were held concurrently and addressed issues current to those attending and future topics for next year.

Other lectures offered were on Internet capabilities, fund raising ideas and professional partnerships available through NSFNO.

The business meeting was conducted with elections of new officers.

The dues structure was voted on for 1997 (there are five categories and each pays according to membership size), and ARNA's dues will be \$750/yr. as category I.

The final session, presented by Phyllis Kretik, was entitled "Negotiation-Winning not Whining", and discussed conflict resolution in the health care setting from a nurse's perspective.

The overall experience from this meeting was exciting and gave ARNA

valuable resources to utilize in the future as we complete our first core-curriculum and certification exam.

Health Insurance Reform Enacted

The Kassebaum-Kennedy health insurance reform bill passed Congress on Aug. 2 and President Clinton signed the bill on Aug. 21.

Some of the bill's provisions are:

- requires health insurance companies to guarantee that people who lose or leave their jobs continue to have access to health insurance coverage.
- places limits on insurers denying policies due to pre-existing conditions
- allows individuals with catastrophic illnesses to draw on life insurance while they are still living.
- allows for a experimental project where up to 750,000 people may maintain tax free medical savings accounts for medical emergencies and pay high deductible premiums for catastrophic illnesses.

Although the President signed the bill, he pointed out the need to continue to try to obtain mental health insurance parity, a component that was in the bill, but was dropped in the final version. ANA had endorsed this bill as a beginning to ensure access to appropriate health care for all Americans.

Procardia Precautions

If during procedures you are accustomed to using the calcium channel blocker Nifedipine (Procardia) orally or sublingually to reduce your patient's blood pressure quickly, there are some potential problems associated with this practice which should be considered. Maybe you have noticed that some patients have a tendency to develop sustained hypotension after such administration of Nifedipine, requiring administration of intravenous fluids in large volume to counteract the effects of the medication, and even unplanned admission to the hospital. In the case of patients undergoing coronary bypass surgery and receiving Procardia and a beta blocker, the introduction of Fentanyl for anesthesia has resulted in situations of *severe* hypotension. With the use of Fentanyl becoming more popular for procedures in the diagnostic imaging milieu, this has implications for the Radiology Nurse. Vigilance in monitoring patients is necessary to avoid possible disastrous outcomes. Pfizer, the manufacturer of Nifedipine advises against using this medication to treat acute hypertension; and in cases where high dose Fentanyl is anticipated, thirty-six hours is recommended to allow for complete dissipation of Procardia levels. This leaves us with the problem of how to control the patient's blood pressure. In my assessment

I ascertain whether the patient's usual medications have been given. If not, I arrange for this as quickly as possible, since delaying the procedure contributes to the patient's anxiety level and can affect their blood pressure. Intravenous conscious sedation can be of value, as can encouraging the patient to empty his/her bladder. However, when hypertension threatens to interfere with an otherwise successful procedure, Nitropaste can be applied to the chest wall, administering 1/2" to 1" or more, depending on the patient's body size. One advantage of this is that if headache or undesirable hypotension occurs, part of the paste can be removed until desirable results are achieved. Headaches usually associated with the use of Nitropaste could be minimal if the patient has received narcotic analgesics during the procedure, and they can be treated with 650 mg. of PO acetaminophen (Tylenol).

Thanks to Helen O'Daly RN, BSN for this important information.

A Writer is Born

Linda Strangio, RN, a NJ ARNA member has written her second book. The title of her most recent book is *Lifebeats*. To quote Linda, "the book is a collection of short stories, all based on true events. Some of the stories are happy and some are sad, some are funny and some make you think, hey stuff

like that happens all too often." The book contains 65 of these short stories for and about all types of nurses. Some of these stories have been published in *Nursing Spectrum*, (the NY Metro issue), and one was even printed in *Images*. Basically the stories show just what being a nurse is all about, even though lots of non-nurses have told her they love the book.

Of the 35 articles that Linda has had published, she says the stories in her books were the most fun. She encourages other nurses to try writing. She says, "once you write and publish a story, it's addictive, you don't want to stop".

Linda's first book, *To Be A Nurse*, which contains 74 short stories and *Lifebeats* can be ordered through the mail. The address is Vista Publishing, Inc., 473 Broadway, Long Branch, NJ, 07740 or call toll free at (800) 634-2498. Each book costs \$12.95 plus \$3.00 for S&H. (Each additional book is only \$1.50 S&H (NJ residents have to pay 6% sales tax.)

ARNA 15th Annual Meeting

Please join your colleagues at ARNA's 15th Annual Meeting in Chicago, December 1-3, 1996.

Sunday, December 1, will feature speakers focusing on leadership topics. They are: Toby Anchie, RN, MAEd, American Association of Neuroscience, speaking on

"How Do I Get What I Want and the Money To Do It"; Captain Virginia Beeson, MS, RN, US Navy, addressing "Humor: An Essential Leadership Skill"; and Judith DiFilippo, MS, RN, CCRN, EHS Home Care Service, Inc., speaking on "Completing your Continuing Education Picture: ANCC Provider Accreditation." The fee of \$65 for the Sunday Leadership Program is not included in the Annual Meeting registration fee. This Program is designed to help ARNA's current and future leaders address important topics facing the association.

The Annual Educational program is scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, December 2-3, also at the Westin Hotel. ARNA has responded to attendee's comments and has scheduled two full days of programming with the third day open for attending the RSNA meeting or enjoying Chicago.

For additional information, please call the ARNA office at (630) 571-9072.

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RNNEWS is published quarterly to keep ARNA members better informed.

Send submissions and comments to:

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The Philadelphia Chapter of

I ARNA had a very busy fall season presenting an all day educational seminar entitled "Trends in Radiology" at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children on September 25, 1996.

Fifty-six registered nurses and technologists enjoyed a comprehensive, unique program covering such topics as latex allergies, cerebral embolization, thrombolysis alternatives in peripheral vascular disease, spiral CT, alternative therapies to stress and pediatric and adult sedation. 5.4 CEU;s were offered.

The chapter started in 1986 and has increased from 5 to 40 members. To attract new memberships

they offered a discount price of only \$25.00 to attend Their September seminar. Six new members joined. Each year they offer a \$500.00 scholarship to any active member who wishes to attend outside conferences.

The chapter meets bimonthly, on the third Thursday of the month. In addition to a business meeting and light supper, they have a short educational program. They have bought a camera to document their events for a chapter scrapbook. Great idea!

The Windy City Regional Chapter held their annual meeting, on September 11, 1996. Karen Hall was the hostess, and Dr. Andrew Blum provided valuable information on "Thrombolysis". They were honored by

a visit from Betty Rohr (ARNA Secretary), who shared national news with the group. Refreshments were provided by the Abbokinase representative and Central Dupage Hospital Radiology Department. The new board was elected at this meeting: Janet Johnson-President, Chiquita Hoskins-President-elect, Lesley Elisco-Secretary, Robin Byer-Treasurer. The new board members are: Karen Evans, Diane Zickus and Amy Valdez (past-president).

Their November 6th meeting at Lake Forest Hospital at 6 PM will feature Dr. Stanley Dee and Michael Rose CNMT speaking on "Pediatric Brain Perfusion Imaging in Nuclear Medicine". This will be their first educational offering specifically relating to nuclear medicine.

For further information
call Janet Johnson at (815)

469-6646. The chapter is looking forward to seeing all of you at the ARNA/RSNA meeting in Chicago.

The Michigan Chapter's 74

Members have been very busy since it's birth in 1993. They are finishing, updating and completing their by-laws. A state scholarship fund has been established as well as an educational library.

The local group at ST. Joseph Mercy Hospital-Ann Arbor, Michigan has developed a bi-monthly x-ray Nursing newsletter. It provides them with the opportunity to address nursing issues with the general hospital staff.

Congratulations! What a great way to let other areas of the hospital know who we are and what we do to help the patient population.

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