

# The Bi-County Bulletin

A publication of the Los Angeles/Orange County Chapter  
of the Association of Rehabilitation Nurses

Volume 20 Number 1

March 2010



## *President's Message*

**Frances Abad, MSN, RN, FNP-BC**

Wow! Can you believe a decade has ended? 2009 has indeed been an exciting year, as we look back at the Los Angeles/Orange County ARN Chapter 2009 calendar year; it's hard to believe all that has transpired. We had some awesome educational and social events, which we are honored to share with all members. See the "LA/OC ARN Highlights of 2009" beginning on page 5.

On June 24, 2009, our transitional board meeting was held to welcome and orient the new incoming board members. Outgoing President, Marilyn Pires, presented each Board Member with a certificate of appreciation along with a lovely gift. Then, the incoming 2009-2010 board members were installed, this included: Frances Abad, President; Stacey Helvin, Secretary; Christiana Lassen, Treasurer; Stephanie Vaughn, Crystal Barker, Amy Sutton, Dale Wong, Aries Serafin, Ruby Baines, Board Members. July was the beginning of the 2009/2010 term for the new & returning officers.

Our "Hot" Summer Social was held on August 9, 2009, with a trip to Valley View Casino in the beautiful city of San Diego, where sixteen LA/OC ARN members, family and friends enjoyed a relaxing, fun day of entertainment and great food.

On September 16, we held our Fall Education Event at Casa Colina Centers for Rehabilitation in Pomona, with an Update on Pressure Ulcer Staging. This outstanding event was presented by Joy Edvalson, RN, MSN, FNP, CWON, a noted expert in wound care, with sixty-four LA/OC ARN members and fellow nurses who enjoyed socializing over a delicious dinner while learning about the new pressure ulcer staging system and wound care therapy.

Highlighting 2009, the 35th Annual National ARN Conference and Leadership Course, was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico on October 19-24, 2009. Aries Serafin, Ruby Baines, and I attended the 2 day Leadership Course which provided us with both valuable ARN organizational information and leadership skills. LA/OC ARN Chapter members were among the more than 700 nurses who attended the various exciting educational programs, daily activities and outings, while networking with nurses from all regions of the United States.

In addition, our LA/OC ARN Chapter and four chapter members were selected by the ARN Awards Committee and presented with the following awards during one of the conference sessions:

**The 2009 Local Chapter Communication Award** - This award was given to the LA/OC ARN Chapter because we excelled in regularly communicating with our members. In addition to a certificate, we received a check for \$100.00.

**Laura Ferber MN, RN, CRRN, CNRN**, the Advanced Practice Role Award

**Christine Marlett RN CRRN**, the Nurse Educator Role Award

**Polly Martin BSN, RN, CRRN**, the Staff Nurse Role Award

**Dale Wong BSN, RN, CRRN**, the Nurse Manager Role Award

This was the highest number of awards given to any chapter at this year's conference! Congratulations everyone!

And last, but certainly not the least, our Winter Holiday Social was held on December 5, 2009 at the Victoria Manor Tea House in Old Town Orange. 35 chapter members, family, and friends spent a relaxing afternoon enjoying high tea before starting the hustle and bustle of the holiday season.

As you can see 2009 has indeed been an exciting year for our chapter. We have selected relevant and timely topics to present in 2010. We already have two programs planned for 2010.

On Saturday, March 20, 2010, Potpourri XIX – "To Pee or not to Pee", Urologic Updates, will be held at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center in Downey. In addition, we have rescheduled the Annual Business Meeting to take place after the Potpourri, for those who can stay after the program to attend.

Again, we are co-sponsoring the Professional Rehabilitation Nursing (PRN) Course scheduled to be held at Casa Colina Centers for Rehabilitative Medicine, Inc. in Pomona from Wednesday, April 21 through Saturday, April 24, 2010. This basic rehabilitation nursing and CRRN review course will prepare new nurses to practice rehabilitation nursing and/or experienced nurses to sit for the CRRN certification examination. So mark your calendars and look for flyers coming in the mail soon. Also, plan to attend the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual ARN Educational Conference in Orlando, Florida from September 29 -October 2, 2010. Brochures will be sent soon.

On behalf of the 2009/2010 LA/OC ARN Board, I would like to personally thank all Chapter members for their dedication, continued commitment, and support of our various educational and social events. Our chapter would not survive or grow without you! I also encourage each of you to take part in planning our 2010 future events, attend our educational programs, and consider becoming an LA/OC ARN board member.

**LA/OC ARN Chapter Calendar**

**Who:** LA/OC ARN members and non members  
**What:** Potpourri XIX – Topic: "To Pee or Not to Pee" – Update on Urologic Issues of Rehabilitation Patients  
**When:** **March 20, 2010**  
**Where:** Rancho Los Amigos NRC, Downey, CA  
**Why:** Education, networking

**Who:** LA/OC ARN members and non members  
**What:** PRN (Professional Rehab Nursing) Review Course  
**When:** **April 21, 22, 23, 24, 2010**  
**Where:** Casa Colina Centers for Rehabilitative Medicine, Inc., Pomona, CA  
**Why:** Preparation for the CRRN Exam and a basic rehabilitation nursing course

**Who:** ARN members/non members  
**What:** Summer Social  
**When:** **TBD**  
**Where:** TBD  
**Why:** Socializing, fun

**ARN & Other Calendar**

**Who:** LA/OC ARN Members/ non-members  
**What:** ARN 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Educational Conference- "The Art, Science, and Magic of Rehabilitation Nursing."  
**When:** **Sept 29-Oct 2, 2010**  
**Where:** Orlando, Florida  
**Why:** Education, Networking

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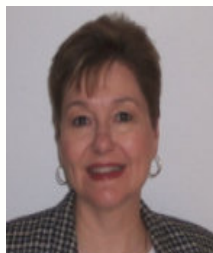
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**Amy Sutton, PhD, RN, MA, CRRN, CLCP**  
**Stephanie Vaughn PhD, RN, CRRN**  
**Dale Wong, BSN, RN, CRRN**

## LA/OC ARN Member Spotlight – Stephanie Vaughn PhD RN CRRN & Lynn Wetherwax MSN RN CRRN



Last year, LA/OC ARN Board Members; Stephanie Vaughn and Lynn Wetherwax, had the opportunity to serve as Paper/Poster Co-Chairs for the 2009 ARN National Educational Conference which was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. They will serve again in 2010 for the ARN national conference which will be held in Orlando, Florida, September 29 - October 2, 2010.

The role and responsibilities of the Paper/Poster Chair and Co-chair can best be summarized as: “brain-stormer”, facilitator, coordinator, puzzle solver, reviewer, and critic! And of course, one of the most important tasks is listening to ARN members’ interests and finding new and stimulating educational topics.

All of this planning for the upcoming conference begins just 2 months after the national conference ends, just enough time to take a deep breath, then the real work begins! The planning starts with several e-mails, phone calls and teleconferences, where program planning committee members and ARN educational staffers discuss educational topics that are of interest to members. The previous year’s conference evaluations are reviewed to see what members liked and disliked about the various programs and suggestions for what they would like to see offered at future conferences. Some of the topics which members would like to see offered were: new and upcoming research and evidenced based practice in rehabilitation, health care reform/political issues, and a multitude of other topics ranging from care of the bariatric, pediatric, geriatric patient and rehabilitation of the cancer patient.

The location where the conference will be held is already chosen well in advance, however the theme is initiated and decided upon by the program planning committee. The theme for the upcoming 2010 ARN Educational Conference is: *The Art, Science, and Magic of Rehabilitation Nursing*. This decision was made after the second teleconference call, and seemed appropriate for the venue!

Numerous teleconferences continue until about mid December. During this time, keynote speakers are

chosen and finalized from a wide array of expert rehabilitation professionals in their fields of practice. In mid January the call for abstract reviewers goes out. In addition, direct e-mails are sent to members who have previously served as reviewers. On February 1, the call for abstracts opens. In March the recruitment of the abstract reviewers begins with all their “bios” being reviewed by the paper/poster chair/co-chairs. Abstract reviewers are selected on the basis of their educational background, expertise, and geographical residence. On April 1, all abstracts for papers, case studies, and posters are due to the ARN website. The paper/poster chair/co-chairs then match the reviewers with the abstracts, and develop a grid which is sent back to the ARN staff. By mid May the abstracts and reviewers’ scores are sent to the paper/poster chair/co-chairs, to group the paper abstracts into educational sessions. Once this is completed, the final list of groupings and accepted posters are submitted to the ARN staff. Lastly, paper moderators and poster judges are selected. Oversight of the poster judging is also performed by the paper/poster chair/co-chairs with the results being compiled and submitted to the ARN staff.

This is a great opportunity for those who would like to become more involved in working with other rehabilitation nurses on a national level. To learn more about these opportunities to serve, contact Mary Beth Benner at ARN. Her email address is: [MBBenner@Connect2amc.com](mailto:MBBenner@Connect2amc.com).

## National News

### Can Nurses Drive Health Reform?

Reprinted with Permission from the Robert Wood Foundation

Upon release last month of a Gallup Survey of opinion leaders about nursing leadership, Risa Lavizzo Mourey, MD, president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), said the organization commissioned the survey because of the importance related to “expanding the leadership of nurses and tapping into all the wisdom and expertise that nurses have [which] is critical to healthcare reform and the healthcare system.”

In the survey of 1,500 opinion leaders, nurses were viewed as one of the most trusted sources of health information, but they were often seen as having less impact on healthcare reform than government, insurance and pharmaceutical executives, and others.

Many nursing leaders, though, think the tide may be turning in that area and that the roles of nurses—and the work that they do—will be steadily influencing the movement toward healthcare reform and emerging health policy and research issues. Overall, they need to take advantage of opportunities that are opening up to them now.

Some of those opinions were expressed at the conference releasing the survey itself. "We do have considerable evidence about nurses' contributions" in areas such as patient safety, overall quality, care coordination, aging, and prevention, said Mary Naylor, PhD, RN, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing, and program director of the RWJF Interdisciplinary Nursing Quality Research Initiative.

"We know nurses are making a major contribution in terms of improving value, quality, alignment with patients' experiences, and with family caregivers' experiences relative to investment in costs," Naylor said. "Equally important, we are making major contributions—and we have major evidence to support this—in areas where opinion leaders have identified that we have little influence around access, around cost and efficiency."

"So the tremendous opportunity here is to get that message out as quickly as we can—to share the knowledge, to capitalize on every opportunity, to communicate what we know so that we continue to have others build on our ideas," she said. "We have a treasured gift here: The public trusts us. So we have to build on that foundation. We have to accelerate our ability to influence what it is that we know they need because [the public] is actually counting on us."

With healthcare reform being on the mind of many, "This is really an opportunity for all of us to begin to change our paradigm—the way that we think of healthcare being delivered," said Rich Hader, senior vice president and chief nursing officer at Meridian Health, an integrated healthcare system in New Jersey.

"When you think about it, nursing is at every avenue of the healthcare experience—whether or not it's in prevention and wellness, or diagnostic and treatment, or rehab or end-of-life care. It is the nurse who is the consistent, focused caregiver who is able to move us through that system," he said at the RWJF conference. Reform?"

### **Nursing's Rx for Health Care Reform**

Reprinted with Permission from the Robert Wood Foundation

A newly released policy brief is giving federal and state policy-makers new information on the many ways nurses are poised to transform our health care system.

The latest publication in the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (RWJF's) Charting Nursing's Future series identifies nursing initiatives across the nation that collectively point the way to transformation of the country's health care system. "Nursing's Prescription for a Reformed Health Care System" combines case studies with analysis and policy recommendations, and arrives on the desks of lawmakers and health care reformers just as Congress and the President begin to piece together what promises to be the most significant

overhaul of the nation's health care system since the creation of Medicare.

"Nurses have created model programs in acute care, primary care and public health settings that are improving the health status of individuals and communities," the brief declares. "These initiatives are expanding access, improving quality and driving down costs." The brief goes on to highlight case studies demonstrating exactly that. Among them:

**Comprehensive Community-Based Care for the Elderly.** The Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) uses nurses and other health professionals to provide comprehensive, integrated medical care and social services. Payment is per-patient-served, creating incentives for high-quality care that keeps patients out of acute care settings. PACE was first created in San Francisco by a community organization but is now an optional Medicaid service in 31 states and a permanent benefit under Medicare. States using PACE report that it reduces costs and improves service utilization patterns.

**Nurse-Managed Health Centers and Retail Clinics.** In the last 30 years, nurses have established more than 250 nurse-managed health centers around the nation, providing care in communities where disparities in health care are most pronounced. At one such clinic, 11th Street Family Health Services, profiled in the February issue of *Sharing Nursing's Knowledge*, nurses have developed a variety of innovative approaches to managing chronic conditions. But nurse-led practices are ineligible under current rules for the now ongoing Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services medical home demonstration project, which might otherwise provide much needed financial support to their efforts to provide care to underserved communities.

**Transforming the Workplace to Support Quality.** A recent study finds that nurses in hospitals spend just one-fifth of their time on patient care—spending the rest tracking down supplies, doing paperwork, and communicating with other team members with often outmoded systems and tools. Meanwhile, faster patient turnover in hospitals due to cost-containment policies means sicker patients and increased work from transitioning patients in and out of facilities. The result: quicker burnout and higher staff turnover. The Magnet Recognition Program of the American Nurses Credentialing Center encourages hospitals to become magnets for nurses by improving their work environment. Similarly, Transforming Care at the Bedside (TCAB), a pilot program of the RWJF and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement whose tools and messages have spread to hundreds of hospitals across the nation, has pioneered nurse-led innovations in medical-surgical units. At one TCAB site, Seton Northwest Hospital in Austin, Texas, nurses now join other members of the interdisciplinary care team on daily rounds,

strengthening communication with physicians and improving patient care. Such reforms help retain experienced nurses, improve the quality of care, save money, reduce complications for recovering patients and even save lives.

The brief highlights other reform approaches, including:

**Reforming state and federal laws.** Law and regulations in 23 states permit nurse practitioners to practice independently, but in 27, they must either practice under the supervision of, or in collaboration with, a physician. Reforms that allow and encourage nurses to practice to the full extent of their training could significantly expand access to care.

**Investing in school nursing.** School nurses do much more than tend to minor injuries these days. They identify health problems that affect learning, administer medications for physical and behavioral conditions, provide health counseling and education on smoking and obesity, conduct surveillance for communicable diseases, join in emergency preparedness activities and enable students with disabilities to be educated with their peers. Just as important, they are often the gateway to other medical services. But fewer than half of public schools in the United States have a full-time registered nurse on staff.

**Engaging nurses in development of health information technology (HIT).** Nurses have a unique and vital vantage point on the potential of health information technologies in the health care workplace. The brief quotes Lillee Gelinias, R.N., M.S.N., F.A.A.N., vice president and chief nursing officer, VHA Inc., an alliance of more than 22,000 health care organizations: "Because nurses are integral to health care, they must be integral to improvements in that process. Their knowledge of patient care, interdisciplinary communication and care transitions equips them to act as ambassadors between patients and the health system. Excluding them from the development and design of HITs will sabotage successful implementation."

"Health care reform in the United States can only succeed if we put all of our resources to their best use," says Susan Hassmiller, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N., RWJF's senior adviser for nursing. "In the case of nursing, that will require a number of structural reforms. We expect this brief to help point the way."

## **THE LA/OC ARN HIGHLIGHTS OF 2009**

### **January**

The annual business meeting was held on January 21, 2009 at St. Jude Wellness Center in Brea. 23 members from a variety of rehabilitation facilities and practice settings attended and helped plan the programs and activities for 2009.

### **March**

The Potpourri XVIII - Polytrauma: "Solving the Puzzle" which was held on Saturday, March 21, 2009 at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center in Downey. Over fifty nurses from various practice settings attended an excellent educational program.

### **April**

The Professional Rehabilitation Nursing (PRN) course was held on April 22-25, 2009 at Long Beach Memorial Hospital in Long Beach. This basic rehabilitation and CRRN Review Course was attended by twenty two nurses. Many of the rehabilitation nurses attending our course successfully completed the CRRN examination and received their CRRN certification.

### **August**

Our Summer Social was held on August 9, 2009, with a trip to Valley View Casino in the beautiful northern San Diego County, where sixteen LA/OC ARN members, family and friends spent a fun day of entertainment and great food.

### **September**

Our Fall Education Event was held on September 16, 2009, at Casa Colina Centers for Rehabilitative Medicine, Inc. in Pomona, with an Update on Pressure Ulcer Staging presented by Joy Edvalson, RN, MSN, FNP, CWON a noted expert in wound care. This outstanding event was attended by 64 nurses and friends who enjoyed socializing over a delicious dinner while learning about the new Pressure Ulcer Staging System.

### **October**

The 35th Annual ARN Educational Conference was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico from October 19-24, 2009. Three new LA/OC ARN Chapter Board members attended the Leadership Conference, which was held the two days prior to the Conference. The Leadership Conference provided them both with valuable Leadership and ARN Organizational information. Other Chapter members attended the conference which offered them an excellent variety of educational sessions and networking opportunities with nurses from all over the U.S. and abroad. Stephanie Vaughn and Lynn Wetherwax were the paper and poster co-chairpersons for the conference and did an outstanding job selecting excellent papers and posters for presentation! Other Chapter members presented papers and posters.

Additionally, our Chapter received the 2009 Chapter Communication Award. This award is given to the chapter who excelled in communicating with its members. In addition to a certificate, we received a check for \$100.

The following Chapter member received Role Awards during the conference:

**Laura Ferber MN, RN, CRRN, CNRN** - ARN Advanced Practice Role Award

**Christine Marlett RN CRRN** - ARN Nurse Educator Role Award

**Polly Martin BSN, RN, CRRN** - ARN Staff Nurse Role Award

**Dale Wong BSN, RN, CRRN** - ARN Nurse Manager Role Award

### December

Our Winter Holiday Social was held on December 5, 2009 at the Victoria Manor Tea House in Old Town Orange. 35 members, family and friends socialized while enjoying a high tea which was a great way to kick off the holiday season.



**LA/OC Professional Rehabilitation Nursing Course is coming soon!** The following two pages contain the information you need to apply for a scholarship to the course.

## LOS ANGELES - ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER of the ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION NURSES

### Professional Rehabilitation Nursing Course Scholarship

Casa Colina Centers for Rehabilitative Medicine, Inc. Department of Nursing, in collaboration with the Los Angeles/Orange County Chapter of the Association of Rehabilitation Nurses, will be co-sponsoring the annual Professional Rehabilitation Nursing Course on April 21, 22, 23 & 24, 2010 at Casa Colina.

The course is designed to meet the educational needs of Registered Nurses new to rehabilitation, as a CRRN review course for those planning to take the certification exam, and a way for experienced nurses to update their information about the practice of rehabilitation nursing. **Look for the PRN Course brochure either attached to this E-Mail or being mailed in the next few days for more specific information on course content, registration information, and continuing education hours credit.**

As a way to celebrate our commitment to assist Los Angeles - Orange County ARN members in their endeavor to develop greater expertise in this aspect of the art and science of rehabilitation nursing, the **LA - OC ARN Chapter is offering 1 scholarship for this course. The scholarship will pay the entire course fee of \$425.**

#### **To apply for the scholarship, you must be an RN:**

- a. currently practicing as an RN in a rehabilitation setting.
- b. planning to take the CRRN examination or new to rehabilitation nursing.
- c. who is a **member of the Los Angeles Orange County Chapter of the Association of Rehabilitation Nurses at the time you apply for the scholarship (or you can join ARN at the same time you apply for the scholarship)**. Contact Chriss Lassen @ (562) 401-6214 for membership information.

#### **The application will consist of:**

- a. Writing an essay (150-250 words) explaining why you want/deserve the scholarship and what you will do with the information learned in the course.
- b. An agreement to do one of the following: **1) or 2)** below within 10 months of completion of the course:
  - 1)** write an article for the newsletter either explaining how you used the information learned in the course to improve patient care/ outcomes **&/or**
  - 2)** your experience taking the PRN Course
- c. Commitment to attend an LA OC ARN Business or Educational meeting within the next year.

Applications are to be completed and mailed to the LA OC ARN PO Box Office by **April 12, 2010**. The winner will be notified by **April 16, 2010**.

