

The Bi-County Bulletin

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

Volume 21 Number 2

June 2011



President's Message

Paddy Garvin-Higgins, RN, MN, CRRN, CNS

Happy summer to everyone!!! What a year this has been! As always, our chapter continues to be active and busy and is here for you. After all, we can still call ourselves the BEST chapter in the United States – at least until November when the next best chapter is announced! Let's glow in that light until then!!! Since our last newsletter, we have once again undertaken several activities that continue to show our commitment to our members.

First, on Saturday, March 19th, 2011, we hosted our LA/OC Chapter Spring Potpourri XX at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Hospital in Downey. The title of this year's conference was "Robotics, Rehab & Recovery: Technological Advances in Rehabilitation Care". We had a great line up of speakers who presented state of the art treatments featuring exciting new approaches to rehabilitation care illustrating the latest available technology. We had over 40 participants and feedback was once again excellent. Please see the full article summarizing this educational event later in the newsletter. We are always grateful to Rancho Los Amigos for continuing to host this each year. They always do a super job in setting up a great learning environment and in making everyone feel comfortable! We also appreciate all of the vendor support we get each year!

Next, from April 27-30, 2011, we held our annual Professional Rehabilitation Nursing (PRN) course at the Memorial Care Rehabilitation Institute at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center in Long Beach. It was attended by 14 participants this year from as far away as Santa Barbara, CA. Rehabilitation experts from nursing, medicine, therapy, social services, and neuropsychology shared their vast knowledge with us. Many of the participants are planning on sitting for the CRRN exam this month or in December. We wish them much success! Again, we thank all of the speakers and staff that helped make this course offering so successful once again.

Our next big event will take place on Saturday, July 23, 2011 at the Springfield Banquet Center in Fullerton. We are inviting all members to join us as we celebrate our

next biggest milestone! This will mark our 35th year as a chapter! Dale Wong and her task force have planned a very special event for us. You should have received your invitation in the mail. We hope many of our members will be able to join us for this fun day!

Finally, this will be my last newsletter entry as your LA/OC Chapter President. On July 1st, Dale Wong will be taking over the reins from me. It has been a wonderful year of activities and learning. Dale will be an excellent leader and will transition nicely into this role. She has been instrumental in many activities as one of our board members at large and as one of our historians. Please welcome me in congratulating Dale in her new role! Thanks so much again for allowing me to be your chapter president this past year. It has been an honor and a privilege. It was a lot of work, but great fun!

Take care always,
Paddy Garvin Higgins

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY JULY 23, 2011

**LA/OC ARN CHAPTER WILL BE CELEBRATING 35
YEARS AS A CHAPTER WITH A SPRING TEA
GARDEN BRUNCH! EVERYONE WELCOME!**

Cost: \$30 per person or \$55 for two
When: Sat, July 23rd from 10am-1pm
Location: Springfield Banquet & Conference Center
501 N Harbor Blvd
Fullerton, CA 92832

Flyers will be coming soon.

For more information, contact Dale Wong at 714-992-3000 ext 2796

LA/OC ARN Chapter Calendar

- Who:** LA/OC ARN members/Non members
What: Summer Social
When: **July 23, 2011**, 10am – 1pm
Where: Springfield Banquet & Conference Center, Fullerton, CA
Why: Celebrating 35 years as a chapter!
- Who:** LA/OC ARN members/Non members
What: Fall Educational Meeting : Spirituality in the SCI patient
When: **September 21, 2011**
Where: Healthsouth Tustin Rehabilitation Hospital
Why: Education, networking, dinner
- Who:** LA/OC ARN members and Non members
What: Winter Social
When: **December 2011**
Where: TBD
Why: Socializing

ARN & Others Calendar

- Who:** ARN Members/ Non members
What: The 2011 International Conference on Spinal Cord Medicine and Rehabilitation
When: **June 4-8, 2011**
Where: Washington D.C.
Why: Education, Networking
Link: <http://www.asia-iscos2011.org>
- Who:** ARN Members/ Non members
What: ARN 37th Annual Educational Conference
When: **November 2-5, 2011**
Where: Rio Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada
Why: Education, Networking

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The Bi-County Bulletin is published by the Los Angeles/Orange County Chapter of the Association of Rehabilitation Nurses.

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The Bi-County Bulletin is published quarterly.

The Bi-County Bulletin
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LA-OC ARN Potpourri XX

Robotics, Rehab and Recovery: Technological Advances in Rehabilitation Care.

The annual LA/OC chapter Rehabilitation Nursing Potpourri was held at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center on March 19, 2011. This event featured speakers sharing their research and professional experience with the use of the latest robotic technologies applied to the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and chronic diseases.



The first speaker, Eric R. Wade PhD, a post doctoral fellow at the USC Motor Behavior and Neurorehabilitation Laboratory and the USC Interaction Laboratory gave a presentation entitled Robotics for Ambient Living: Cool, Practical or Both? Dr. Wade's research has explored the impact of human to humanoid robot interaction on functional performance and learning in people undergoing rehabilitation, elderly individuals and school age children. Dr. Wade's research holds much promise for rehabilitation of individuals with stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury and other neurological injuries. However he stated at the conclusion of his presentation these technologies are tools and are not stand alone solutions for rehabilitation and they should be used at the proper therapeutic stage.

Steven C. Cramer M.D. then spoke on Stroke Recovery & Robotic Therapies. During his talk he highlighted the various therapies that are being explored to improve recovery after a stroke. These therapies include growth factors, cell-based therapies, intensive physiotherapy, robotic and prosthetic devices, electromagnetic and laser stimulation of the brain, as well as other therapies that he touched on. After briefly discussing the research that has been done with each of these therapies, he detailed the research that has been done with robotic approaches to stroke recovery. During his presentation he identified a host of disparate variables that can affect

recovery from stroke. In summarizing his presentation he stressed that therapies are best given with the principles of time-sensitivity, experience dependence and patient selection.



After a delicious brunch, Paul Wacnik, PhD, Principal Scientist, Medtronic Inc. spoke about Innovations in Neuromodulation. He enlightened the audience on the use of deep brain stimulation (DBS) which is currently used to treat motor fluctuations and dyskinesias when medications are no longer working. Currently DBS is used to treat Parkinson' disease, essential tremor, chronic pain and malignant pain. Possible future applications of this therapy include treatment for depression, chronic migraine and chronic pain that will not respond to opioids. Dr. Wacnik also spoke about the current science on baclofen pumps. Baclofen treatment alleviated late onset spasticity by 60% and causes no negative effect on gait or memory according to the research presented by Dr. Wacnik.





Becky Mauger, RN, BSN, Clinical Educator, Medtronic Corporation then discussed the Nurses Role with Implantable Devices. During her presentation she showed video clips demonstrating how the baclofen pump in combination with rehabilitation can markedly improve spasticity. She then outlined the care of the patient from patient selection through patient education post pump placement.



Heather Worden, BBME, MSOP, an orthotist and prosthetist with the VA Medical Center, Long Beach discussed all of the various options for prosthetic limbs available today. Many of them feature state of the art materials and technologies including robotic features. She brought a patient who demonstrated his prosthesis.

Truly the highlight of the day was an uplifting and positive presentation by Katie Sullivan, a user of the prosthetic limb technologies that Heather Worden had introduced to the group. Unlike many of the individuals that rehabilitation nurses care for, Katie was born without legs. Although possessing a significant disability she was able to overcome this barrier with the help of loving parents, teachers who cared and her own indomitable spirit. She shared her life and accomplishments in athletics, a career in acting in theater, movies and TV and in her marriage. The best was saved for last as we were all reminded by Heather's presentation why we became rehabilitation professionals.



Thus concluded a wonderful educational experience as the LA/OC Potpourri came to an end. During this event, the participants enjoyed the company of friends old and new; everybody was stimulated to stretch their minds and think about new possibilities in technology; and each participant brought back some valuable knowledge that can be applied to their practice.



LA/OC ARN Chapter PRN Course

This year's PRN (Professional Rehabilitation Nursing) course was held over four days from April 27-30, 2011 at the Memorial Care Rehabilitation Institute at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center in Long Beach, CA. Fourteen nurses attended this educational course, which provides a comprehensive overview of rehabilitation nursing concepts, taught by expert rehabilitation clinicians. This course provides nurses with an excellent review for the CRRN exam. Feedback about this year's program was positive! Many of the participants are planning on sitting for the CRRN exam this month or in December. The exam application is available at www.rehabnurse.org or by calling 800/229/7530. A special thanks to Paddy Garvin Higgins who coordinated this year's very successful program.

