

# News of The Academy of Neonatal Nursing

Shirley J. Brott, RN, BSN, MEd  
Editor

## New Executive Director Named

Upon the retirement of Charles Rait, RN, MEd, PNC, Debbie Fraser Askin, RNC, MS, has agreed to work with ANN's Executive Committee to move the Academy forward. Ms. Askin's connection to the journal, as well as her clinical practice position at St. Boniface Hospital, Winnipeg, and teaching position at the University of Manitoba, give her a strong background in education with application to clinical practice.

Watch for a new members-only e-newsletter, and other new educational services for members of the Academy. Be sure to keep the ANN office up-to-date with your current e-mail address.

## ANN's Recruitment/Reimbursement Membership Program Continues to be a Success!

It's no wonder the Recruitment/Reimbursement Program is a success. Members earn \$10 coupons for each new member recruited. The best part is, there is no limit! Elisa Gabot of Beaumont, Texas, herself a new member, recruited 14 members and received \$140 worth of coupons! Coupons can be redeemed for membership, conference tuition, and books from the Academy and NICU Ink bookstore. Members can even splurge on our popular black ANN sweatshirt or the new bright blue zipper sweatshirt. By joining ANN, members are offered 15 free contact hours of continuing education through the courses published in *Neonatal Network*.®

ANN members automatically receive a year's subscription to *Neonatal Network*.® *Neonatal Network*.® has over 25 years of neonatal nursing publishing history and is peer reviewed by a vast wealth of nursing professionals from around the world. This groundbreaking journal continues to be the leading neonatal nursing publication.

By joining ANN, each member automatically contributes \$1 to the Foundation of Neonatal Research and Education (FNRE), which offers academic scholarships and grants to neonatal nurses.

## Baby Nicutie



All of this adds up to the best possible care for babies who need the most care. Join ANN, recruit a member, and get reimbursed!

## Feel the Learn

For a complete listing of continuing education courses offered by ANN, go to [www.academyonline.org](http://www.academyonline.org). For online CEUs, click on "Member Benefits," then "Continuing Education Courses." For CEUs offered by NICU Ink and the Neonatal Radiology Basics CD, click on "Shop Online." It's that easy.

## ANN's Executive Committee Update

Academy News asked each of our executive committee members, Joanne Ridky, Pat Johnson, Ginny McCann, and Debbie Fraser Askin, to share with ANN their updated CVs. Academy News had the privilege to catch up with Joanne Ridky about her CV and her work in the NICU.

Joanne "Jody" Craigie Ridky, RN, MA, started her career as a physical education teacher after completing her bachelor of arts in education at Oklahoma University. She taught physical education at Fayetteville-Manlius Central Junior High School in Manlius, New York, where she developed a curriculum for coeducational physical education and planned and managed the intramural program for 400 students. After five years of teaching, Jody decided to change her career path. She went back to school and received her RN from Prince George's Community College in Maryland. After graduation, she gained experience in general surgery, then the pediatric intensive care (PICU). She transitioned from the PICU to a special care nursery, where she soon became assistant department manager. It was not long before she became the department manager and codirected, with the medical director, the conversion of the special care nursery into a Level III NICU.

After this tremendous feat, Jody decided it was again time for a change. She entered the exciting world of agency/travel nursing. The flexibility of her career choice allowed her to complete her master of arts in management from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland. After almost ten years, Jody continues to enjoy this unique field of neonatal nursing. Jody's agency assignments are at Level III NICUs in the Baltimore/Washington area, and her travel assignments take her to Level II and III NICUs in multiple states in the U.S.

The NICUs where Jody is placed are typically under stress due to staffing shortages. One of her greatest concerns is hospitals placing nurses without NICU experience in the NICU. "There is a real need for cross-training with a minimum of baseline skills the nurses must have before

they can work in the NICU." Jody also recommends all neonatal nurses and units have a copy of *Neofax*, a pocket-sized drug and nutritional reference manual for neonates. (For more information regarding *Neofax*, go to [www.neofax.com](http://www.neofax.com).) This is a particularly timely suggestion in light of the latest NICU medication error on national news recently. (See "Academy News Briefs".) Jody is also involved as a legal consultant, reviewing charts for court cases.

From gaining the cooperation of hundreds of adolescents to helping stressed nurses in a highly technical, understaffed environment, Jody's vast experience as teacher, administrator, and agency/travel nurse offers ANN members a unique perspective on neonatal nursing issues. The Academy of Neonatal Nurses is proud and privileged to have Jody as a member of the Executive Committee.

## Academy News Briefs

- On September 19, 2006, ABC News reported six premature babies accidentally were given 1,000 times the prescribed dosage of heparin, killing two baby girls and leaving four babies critically ill. The problem stemmed from a mix-up of nearly identical vials. According to a recent study by the Institute of Medicine in Washington, D.C., the group found every hospital patient in this country is subject to one medication error a day, resulting in 1.5 million people a year suffering some harm from medication mistakes. The frequency of medication errors varies substantially across the country. A number of hospitals use a bar-code system to match patients with the proper dose to avoid making mistakes ([www.abcnews.go.com](http://www.abcnews.go.com)).
- The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is backing a resolution adopted by nurses in New Jersey calling for all entry-level nurses to earn their BSN within ten years of entering nursing practice. The AACN said the measure is consistent with calls from federal authorities and national nursing organizations for a more highly educated workforce. AACN, however, would like to see the ten-year time frame shortened, reports *RN* magazine (October 2006, Vol. 69, No. 10).
- The National League of Nursing (NLN) and Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching launch a national survey of nurse educators. The joint survey has been designed to compare faculty in other academic disciplines and help nursing education administrators to demonstrate differences in workload, make the case for increasing nurse faculty salaries to a competitive level, and improve retention and recruitment. For more information, go to [www.nln.org](http://www.nln.org).



- SIDS is once again in the news. Researchers at Children's Hospital Boston, Harvard Medical School, and University of California San Diego Medical School autopsied the brains of 31 infants who died from SIDS. Their findings, reported in the October 2006 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, showed the medullas of SIDS babies had anomalies in nerve cells that respond to serotonin, a chemical related to breathing and sleeping. The brains of male SIDS patients had more abnormalities than those of female patients, which may explain why boys are twice as likely as girls to die from SIDS. "Perhaps a test will be developed to help identify infants at risk the first few weeks of life, but any test to detect SIDS is years away," says Dr. John Kattwinkel, professor of pediatrics at the University of Virginia. For more information, go to <http://sids-network.org/experts/brainstem.htm>.

### Check It Out

*Preemie Magazine* is a free publication developed in 2005 by five "preemie parents" and partnered with The March of Dimes for parents of premature infants and neonatal health care professionals. This informative magazine is definitely worth having on the unit for everyone to learn from and enjoy. Check it out at [www.preemiemagazine.com](http://www.preemiemagazine.com).

### YourSpace

Welcome to YourSpace, a feature for Academy members who have a question, idea, or point of interest to share with the neonatal nursing community. All responses and suggestions will be read and considered for publication.

Has your unit started a Journal Club yet? Think "Book Club," but using articles from professional journals instead. It is a great way for busy professionals to remain current with research and literature. Each month, members take turns selecting and distributing the article; then members meet for a 45-minute discussion. Journal Clubs are also an enjoyable way to earn CEUs! Does your unit have a Journal Club? Let us know! Send your replies to [sjbrott@neonatalnetwork.com](mailto:sjbrott@neonatalnetwork.com).

## ANN's 2007 Calendar

### February

- 28 Poster Presentation abstract and application due for ANN's National Advanced Practice Neonatal Nursing Conference, Honolulu, Hawaii, April 18-21

### April

- 18-21 4th National Advanced Practice Neonatal Nursing Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii
- 25 DNA Day (Watson and Crick discover the double helix.)

### May

- 1 ANN's Conference Scholarship Award application deadline  
ANN's Scholarship Award (academic) application deadline
- 6 Celebrate Nurses Day!

### June

- 1 Poster Presentation abstract and application due for ANN's 7th National Neonatal Nurses Meeting, Las Vegas, Nevada, September 5-8
- 30 Excellence in Neonatal Nursing Practice Award nomination deadline

### September

- 5-8 7th National Neonatal Nurses Meeting, Las Vegas, Nevada
- 15 Celebrate Neonatal Nurses Day!

### December

- 31 Deadline for submissions for Excellence in Writing Award