

# NETLETTER

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## Message from the President

By Deborah Johnson



REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

ANNUAL STATE CHAPTER  
CONFERENCE:

Innovative Practices

in

Psychiatric Mental Health

Nursing

April 26, 2014

University of California

Los Angeles (UCLA)

**American Psychiatric Nurses Association-California Chapter** What is your greatest need as a psychiatric nurse or affiliated member? Whatever it is, my guess is that you joined APNA in hopes of finding it, strengthening it, revitalizing it, solidifying it, improving it, advancing it, or passing it on to others.

So, how does APNA do this? APNA is founded as an educational organization, with the mission of providing guidance toward best practice in psychiatric nursing. We do this through an annual National Conference each October (don't miss Indianapolis October 22-25) and a State Conference each April (please join us Saturday, April 26!) Beyond that, we do it through on-line resources on the Member Bridge of [www.APNA.org](http://www.APNA.org). Members can join the All Purpose Discussion Forum, our California Community Forum and as many other Community discussion groups as needed based on your interests. The Member Bridge also links individuals seeking mentoring with members who are available to serve as mentors. Another wonderful resource is the Directory. Members can "find" one another and send messages to other members who might not be otherwise accessible. You can even set it up so that such emails come straight to your personal email account! In addition to the resources through our Member Bridge on the national site, California Chapter has our very own website at [www.apnaca.org](http://www.apnaca.org) Thanks to our two past presidents, Michael Fitzgerald and Michael Terry, our website continues (with Mike Terry at the wheel!) providing updates on issues that are relevant to our practice as psychiatric nurses in California.

While these resources are very useful (once you learn to navigate the website), the best resource in this organization is YOU! As a member of APNA, you have much to contribute to your colleagues and ultimately to psychiatric nursing practice. By collaborating with one another, we are able to strengthen, revitalize, solidify, improve, advance, and pass on our practice in order to provide recovery-oriented care to the clients we are privileged

to serve. The purpose of the NetLetter is to provide a mechanism to get to know our colleagues across this golden state.

We welcome each of you to send a brief synopsis of your professional activities so that others can be inspired by what you do. If you are reticent to share your interests and accomplishments perhaps interview a colleague on the grounds that they will interview you too. It is my hope that eventually we will have a paragraph on each member, allowing us to celebrate the wonderful diversity and qualities that bring us together as members of APNA.

Please consider this a personal invitation to become involved in your organization by joining us at the state conference (coming soon!), considering becoming an area rep, hosting and attending meetings, inviting colleagues, and sharing your successes (and challenges!) through this quarterly California Chapter NetLetter.



## Getting to Know the People that Work for You...

Did you know that our Chapter participates in a State-wide coalition that is dedicated to disaster mental health services? Check out the website of the California Disaster Mental Health Coalition (CDMHC), [www.cdmhc.org](http://www.cdmhc.org), and you will learn about this "California-based, multidisciplinary, collaborative, disaster mental health coalition of organizations, established for coordination and information-sharing in the service of the delivery of disaster services."

Our Chapter has been active in this Coalition for many years, and, recently, a call went out for two members that would represent us as we take our participation on the Coalition to a new level. Marika O'Baire Kark (Northern CA) and Michelle Buckman (Southern CA) have committed to full participation on the Coalition, attendance at all meetings and coordinating a meeting from time to time.

Please plan to meet these two exceptional nurses when they present a workshop at the APNA CA Chapter state-wide conference at UCLA on April 26, 2013. Allow me to introduce you.

### Marika O'Baire Kark

Marika is an experienced mental/behavioral health, critical care, hospice, and home health nurse. She has a Master of Science degree in Health Science, Disaster and Emergency management, and a second Master of Fine Arts degree in writing and consciousness from the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco. Marika is a poet who writes novels and sometimes creative nonfiction. She says that she loves "teaching nurses to write examples of their work, how they think, how they feel, because these stories are so beautiful. When do bedside nurses have a chance to have a voice?"

Marika has done Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (Berkeley Extension), and shelter management training from the Red Cross. In applying for the CDMHC representative position, Marika said, "One of the exercises I participated in with the Red Cross had to do with being the Mental Health nurse triaging the worried well, people who had been injured in some way etc. and I learned that there is a large volume of need after a disaster, requiring that we may need to consider a way to educate the general public in the basics of mental health. That may seem like a huge, long term task, but it seems to me it is well worth doing and doable."

Marika is the mother of four grown children and five grandchildren, stepmom to five more adults and eight more grandchildren. She is a licensed Avatar Master as part of a team delivering the Avatar International courses to students from all over the world (see [www.avatarepc.com](http://www.avatarepc.com).)



## **Michelle Buckman**

**Michelle Buckman is a psychiatric nurse in the Loma Linda University emergency department. Her duties include complete psychiatric evaluation, de-escalation, and emergency care, placement of the 5150, and provision of education for the staff on care of the psychiatric patient. Michelle says, "I like working with staff and agencies in the community to help this population and have been in this position since July 2004." In her application for the CDMHC position, Michelle said, "I very much enjoy caring for people who have experienced current or past trauma and am involved from the moment the person is admitted to the ED until we find placement/transportation for them. It is very important to me that patients are cared for in a holistic manner including acknowledgement of trauma they may be suffering."**

**Michelle has experience serving on a national work team for the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA), creating policy and developing standards for psychiatric patients in emergency rooms. This work team reviewed and developed best practices, identified stakeholders and worked together with people from many disciplines in the community. She hopes to become certified in critical incident care at some point in the future.**

**Be sure and watch the APNA CA Chapter website for trainings in disaster mental health care, and for other information that Marika and Michelle will be bringing to us from the CDMHC.**

## Getting to Know Our Board Members:

### Marla McCall-Member-at-Large

1) Why do you serve on the board?

I wanted to serve on the board to network with others and to contribute to leadership in psychiatric nursing. Our organization is a very caring and supportive community that truly enriches lives and helps to keep us focused on why we are in this profession.

2) How long have you been serving on the board?

I have been serving on the board since fall 2013 when the CA APNA election results came in. I was surprised that I was elected and feel it is quite a privilege to be associated with such a great group of professional nurses.

3) What do you get out of belonging to APNA?

APNA is a great vehicle to connect with colleagues, keep abreast of practice changes, and become inspired by the activities of others around the country. Learning about regional differences as well as commonalities in practice environments and the concerns of psychiatric nurses will continue to inform my ideas as a budding nursing educator and researcher (I am a PhD candidate hoping to graduate in Dec 2014).

4) What are some hobbies/activities you enjoy outside of work?

Dancing has been my passion since early childhood. I am a former ballet and modern dancer with stage and screen credits from the Pleistocene Age (wink). Presently I am a certified Zumba instructor, and social swing and blues dancer, with ambition to improve my Argentine Tango skills. I have been involved in theater for social change since the early 2000's and hope to get reacquainted with that community once I finish my PhD. I am an avid home chef preferring healthy organic and ethnic foods.

5) Anything else you would like us to know about you?

Present passions in practice include holistic and functional medicine approaches to mental health, mind-body therapies, relationship of nutrition to health, reduction of violence in society, improving equality in society, and systems change. I am married to a terrific guy and we have two grown children, five young granddaughters, two terriers, and a tiny organic orchard and garden. My husband and I have been the primary persons in charge of two of our parents diagnosed with dementia; my husband's father is now deceased, and my mother is nearing the end of life. The experience of end-of-life care giving does change your perspective on life..... Someday I hope to write fiction that incorporates our experiences and the lessons we learned.

## Dr. Michael Terry-Immediate Past President



Dr. Michael Terry

- 1) Why do you serve on the board? Best way to get involved; discover in-depth what APNA offers, meet folks.
- 2) How long have you been serving on the board? 1 yr as Member-at-Large, 1 as President elect, 1 as President, and this year as Immed. Past President
- 3) What do you get out of belonging to APNA? Folks to share ideas with, links to information and connections, resources, conferences, member bridge are just some.
- 4) What are some hobbies/activities you enjoy outside of work? Bicycling, camping, wine tasting, improv and clowning
- 5) Anything else you would like us to know about you? Curious fact: in April, 1970, the UCLA Mens Glee Club was invited to sing at the White House. I sang a solo piece at a formal dinner with President Richard Nixon and German Chancellor Willie Brandt. One year later, in May 1971, I marched in an anti-war rally where Martial Law was declared. I spent the night in a D.C. jail courtesy of the same Richard Nixon.

## Deborah Johnson-President

### 1) Why do you serve on the board?

Throughout my professional career as a nurse, I have found the best way to meet motivated, inspiring and excellent colleagues is through a professional organization. I was first introduced to APNA through a professor at UCSF when I was a PMHNP student. The mentoring, encouragement and exposure to best practices through both the state and national conferences were just the thing I needed as I launched my career as a PMHNP. Serving on the board has been a privilege as it gives me the opportunity to know the wonderful folks who've been leading our California chapter. I serve because I realize that APNA is about each member and what we bring to one another. It is my privilege to get to know our members and to learn something from each of you that makes me a better nurse. APNA is a great organization because of the great nurses who are involved.

### 2) How long have you been serving on the board?

This is my third year on the board of APNA California Chapter (and my fourth year as a member!) I discovered that new members are welcome to get as involved as possible in local areas (I began as an area representative for Capitol Area members) and state leadership as well as national. Being an Area Rep is the BEST way to become involved in APNA. I found it provided an opportunity to "find" members in my community, reach out to provide FREE continuing education, and collaborate in areas of shared interest/concern. (By the way- there is always room for new folks to get involved as AREA REPS. I hope YOU (reader) consider it!)

### 3) What do you get out of belonging to APNA?

The best part of APNA is local area meetings. It is great to be able to bring in a colleague or inter-professional expert to speak on a topic of interest over dinner with local members. I also like having something to offer to new nurses in the community. APNA offers a venue for including them in meetings and providing natural opportunities for networking.

### 4) What are some hobbies/activities you enjoy outside of work?

I love running and walking in the nature area near my home and hiking on any of the wonderful NorCal trails! Sacramento is known for being "near everything" and I enjoy the chance to soak in the peacefulness of nature whether Sierras, Gold Country (Foothills), along the American River, or near home. My latest "hobby" has been taking MegaBus to San Francisco where I teach at UCSF. I meet interesting people and enjoy the experience of using public transportation instead of driving!

### 5) Anything else you would like us to know about you?

I recently transitioned my NP practice to child and adolescent work-which was my intention all along! In my past life, I was a credentialed school nurse, and I find the mental health issues that children present with are extremely challenging and rewarding to treat. I am very interested in Minuchin's structural family therapy, trauma-focused CBT, and parent child interaction therapy, and would love to talk about other effective treatments with any of you who are working with children and adolescents.

## Suzane Wilbur-Past Treasurer

I joined APNA in 1992 because I wanted to have up-to-date information about the practice of psychiatric mental health nursing. Shortly after that, APNA began giving an award for a Best Practices in the Treatment of Schizophrenia program, and my program won the award in 1998. I was mentored by Wailua Brandman in preparing for this award, and because of his influence, I became determined to be more active in the organization. I became a member of the APNA Best Practices award committee and then coordinator of the main APNA awards committee, a position I held until the national office assumed that responsibility. In 2006, I chaired the APNA Annual Conference, held in Long Beach, CA. Attendance at APNA conferences in addition to receiving information by e-mail (Member Bridge, APNA News, etc.) has been my lifeline to psychiatric mental health nursing. Almost all of my CE requirements are met through APNA conferences and eLearning programs.

In 2007, Marlene Nadler-Moodie recruited me to be a Board member for the APNA CA Chapter. I began as a Member-at-Large, becoming active in disseminating information about disaster mental health services training, gleaned through our Chapter's membership in the California Disaster Mental Health Coalition (CDMHC). In 2009, I was elected Treasurer of our Chapter. I am most proud of working with Mary Ann Nihart to obtain California BRN Continuing Education Provider status for our Chapter in 2010. Any Chapter member can coordinate or participate in a CA BRN CE program by contacting the area representative nearest you.

My hobbies include cycling, hiking, and spending time with my three grandchildren who are now teenagers. Also, I have begun a mentorship for one of my co-workers as he works towards becoming a PMHNP. I encourage all PMH nurses to become active in APNA, at either the national or state level. Keeping members aware of the trends in, and advancement of, psychiatric nursing, as well as informed as to political matters that impact our practice, are worthy endeavors.





## Catherine O'Reilly-Director of Education



1) Why do you serve on the board?

A. Why do I serve on the board? I want to be a part of the body that makes psychiatric mental health nursing the best. In my role as Education Director I get to work with our APNA California leaders and members to identify education opportunities and coordinate the fulfillment of these needs at our state conference. I'd like to send a big THANK YOU to everyone involved with this activity! We will have about 20 presenters at this year's conference as well as a number of poster presentations highlighting innovative mental health and psychiatric nursing projects.

2) How long have you been serving on the board?

A. I've only been on the board a little over a year. The Education director position is a new one. Many of the tasks were previously carried out by various board members and the goal was to take some of the workload off the other positions and put more concentrated effort into our education focus.

3) What do you get out of belonging to APNA?

The most important thing I get out of my APNA membership is camaraderie with my peers. I have made friends with some of the greatest individuals in my life through APNA. Of course there are lots of other perks to APNA membership, such as; learning about evidenced best psychiatric practices, having the member board to ask questions, mentor programs, staying up to date with legislative issues affecting the mental health community and psychiatric nursing, my list could keep going so I'll stick with those.

4) What are some hobbies/activities you enjoy outside of work?

A. My passion is running. I have finished over 20 marathon races, and last year placed in my age group at several 5K and 10K races. In addition to running I love lots of other outdoor sports and hiked Mt Baldy this winter which took me to over 10,000 feet elevation.

5) Anything else you would like us to know about you?

A. I am passionate about improving access to service for the mentally ill and hope that we as a profession continue to promote stigma busting. Stigma is a major barrier to people accepting treatment for their illness and for treatment service availability as community members protest "Not in my backyard".

# Cheryl Puntil-President-Elect

Cheryl has over 30 years' experience as a psychiatric mental health nurse (PMH) and has worked with diverse geriatric/adult medical and psychiatric clients with multiple diagnoses and complex care needs. As an Advanced Practice Nurse and CNS, she has responsibilities which are both in-patient unit and health system based, including roles that are of administrative, clinical, research, supervisory, and educative in nature. Being computer literate, she utilizes technology, case scenarios, role play, creative art, and utilizes hands on supervision to mentor staff from novice to expert.

Cheryl has developed excellent assessment skills, mentors BSN, NP, MECN and PhD students, and teaches. Areas of interest and expertise are on assessment and management for patients at risk for suicide, dementia, delirium, depression, motivational interviewing, nursing assessment and care planning (role of RN), boundaries in psychiatric nursing, mental status, therapeutic communication, care partner fundamentals, co-occurring disorders, and facilitating groups.

It is evident Cheryl believes in giving back to the nursing profession by collaborating with other PMH members of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA). Advocating for the RN at the bedside to be competent to provide evidence based, personal, and individualized care to patients and their families has been a passion of hers throughout her career. Currently, she is working with an innovative and expert subgroup of the APNA Education Committee to develop suicide specific standards, guidelines and competencies for PMH Nurse Generalists and was asked by APNA to assist in the development of the APNA Transitions to Practice (ATP) Certificate Program, which is designed to help RNs transition into PMH Nursing by providing them with foundational PMH knowledge and skills.

She truly believes that patients come to the hospital for assessment and evaluations, procedures and treatments that cannot be provided outside the hospital, but patients stay in the hospital for nursing care. Providing quality care to patients takes dedication and commitment along with the belief that good nurses require understanding not only of themselves, the science of nursing, the profession's standards, and the nurses' role but those components in relationship to themselves, the client/family, the community and environment in which they practice. Cheryl has been a member of APNA for about 20 years, serving multiple functions; as Treasurer, Los Angeles Area Representative, Member-at Large, conference planning Co-Chair, and President-Elect and values lifelong learning and service through professional associations like APNA.



## An Interview with Nikki DuWick Clinical Nurse at Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA



### **How did you get into psych?**

I was at a point in my life where I needed to learn a skill-based career but I also wanted to do something to give back, or contribute to society. ( I had previously worked in the entertainment industry and I was burnt out on the ego-focused nature of the area )

I had been interested in the medical earlier in my life but hadn't considered nursing at that time. I had prepped to enter college as a biology major/pre-med and was accepted to two major universities but the bottom dropped out for me after my father died suddenly... When I attended nursing school in my psych rotation I realized there was a place that worked for me - and it was psych. Before my psych rotation, the joke was that my preceptors had to pull me away from the patients because I kept talking with them - they were scared, nervous, overwhelmed, frightened - in the medical setting.

### **What is fulfilling about psych?**

Assisting the patient/client to bring hope back into their lives and help them to see that they have options. Educating the patients about choices: helping them to see they DO have choices as opposed to no choices at all. Helping them see they do have a chance. Bringing the "real" to a stigmatized field.

### **What are some of the challenges?**

Making the connection with patients and their families. The challenge and the fulfillment can be the same thing. Working as a team member has been a challenging and learning experience. There is nothing more rewarding than working together as a team but nothing more challenging when team members are at odds or have differing viewpoints of how care is managed. It is important to balance personal life and work life. If your own life is not full than you come to work as a half full vessel and the work is tremendously stressful which drains whatever is present. When your life is full on its own, then you have energy and life that you can bring to the table each day.

## **What are some of the projects outside of work you have been involved with?**

I was one of the co-writers of a research article that measured attitudes towards recovery of psychiatric nurses in a hospital setting.

I have been a member Professional Nursing Practice Committee for three years and this year I am co-chair of the committee.

I am hoping to begin a PMH-NP program.

## **How are the scope and standards changing?**

Actually this is something I can't go into detail on due to the new edition not yet published. I DO know that the changes nationally with ANA will also trickle down to us at APNA and we make changes based on those changes. I have been on the Scope and Standards Task Force for over a year. I worked on the article for about two years and an article post test is planned.

For myself, it is always helpful and inspirational to look to biographies and autobiographies and educational texts to bring new ideas in. They add a shot of energy and inspiration to what I am currently doing. I recently listened to Temple Grandin's "The Autistic Brain" on CD. It provided a great deal of current information in an engaging way. Unfortunately, she was not the reader (I heard her speak a UCLA a few years ago and she was a hoot to listen to - funny and engaging and informative). "Henry's Demons", written by a father and a son with mental illness, was informative on several levels. It helped me see the attitudes of family and son but also gave me insight about how to educate and/or understand the family. This is also a great book to recommend to families and patients.



Nikki presenting at the APNA conference last October

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Los Angeles, CA APNA Executive Director Nick Croce will be attending our state conference. There will be a no-host meet and greet at the Palomar Friday night. Rooms have been reserved at the Palomar for a steep discount of \$200/room (usually \$400). This provides a wonderful venue for catching up with old colleagues and meeting new ones. Members are encouraged to invite a colleague who practices in psychiatric nursing or is interested in learning more. With the emphasis on integration of psychiatry into primary care, nursing colleagues of other disciplines may want to attend this conference in order to network with psychiatric nurses and learn more about the psychiatric specialty. Registration opens Monday 3/3/14. Go to [www.apnaca.org](http://www.apnaca.org) to register



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