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## President's Message

By Margaret Farley, RN, CPN(C)

As we enter the Autumn season I'm reminded of the age-old tradition of *Back to School*. It indicates summer has passed, the holidays are over, and it is time, once again, to focus on education.

It could mean one of many things – preparing children, family members, or yourself to start, continue, or begin again, in the educational arena. In the spirit of learning, many groups, such as perioperative special interest groups, choose to host their annual meetings, workshops and conferences in the fall. This October marks a particularly notable conference as the National Association of Theatre Nurses (NATN), of the United Kingdom, will celebrate its ruby anniversary – 40 years, what a glorious milestone to achieve! Our American counterparts, the American periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN), celebrated its golden jubilee in Chicago last year — imagine 50 years! Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada (ORNAC) is younger by a number of years (we celebrate our 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary this year) but as an entirely volunteer driven group we take strong pride in each annual milestone. I believe credit must be given to all groups for every year they work together for the benefit of the perioperative practice. I attended the AORN anniversary Congress and plan to be in attendance for the NATN celebrations. It is always an honour to celebrate and learn with colleagues.

I am a truly fortunate student as my most recent classroom has been an international one. My teachers have been international colleagues, industry representatives, and delegates. This group of instructors made learning a pleasure while assisting me in maintaining a high level of competence.

Continuing your perioperative education, and updating your skills, is a daily need in our ever-changing theatres. This makes the goal of continued competence seem very elusive. In order to achieve this goal, be sure your Fall includes some time for learning...however you are able to achieve it. A variety of learning tools are available – on CD and the Internet; via video or audio tape; through journals or equipment

demonstrations; through traditional classes offered at universities or by attending a conference. Consider doing a book review — new perioperative books on the market could be in your health sciences libraries or you can join a professional book club in order to order your own to review. The March 2004 issue of this journal (Volume 22, Issue 1) was dedicated to continuing education and reminded us of the importance of ongoing education in our profession. It also gave hints on how to achieve ongoing education and the role we can play in the ongoing learning of others. It can be fun, as well as challenging, to see our specialty through the eyes of a new recruit. Remember the start of your career in nursing? Can you name a nurse who helped you? I don't think I would have survived without my mentors and I will always remember them!

A commitment to ongoing education within your profession is your responsibility. Remember that an educational process need not be limited to the perioperative specialty. It can provide information that enhances your overall practice – such as discovering the world of bariatric challenges in patient care or learning about rehabilitation post hip and knee joint surgeries.

And remember, don't just pursue your education... take the time to enjoy it! ✨

*Margaret Farley, RN, CPN(C) is President of the Operating Room Nurses' Association of Canada. She is the Perioperative Clinical Development Educator at Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region in Regina, SK.*

*Margaret Farley, inf., CSP(C) est présidente de l'Association des infirmières et infirmiers de salles d'opération du Canada. Elle est éducatrice clinique pour le développement des soins périopératoires au Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region à Regina, SK.*

