March 2024

Greetings to all during the first week of spring! This is the time of year when I get impatient for those longer days of sunshine and warmer temps. There's something about spring (in the Midwest) that signifies new life and hope for the future. The birds chirping. The early flower bulbs poking through the cold earth. Grass transforming from a dirty brown layer to bright green. People out walking, riding bikes, and enjoying the fresh air. The anticipation of the next season is special and exciting, and is why I have been a Midwesterner for all of my life. I have embraced the (good and bad) changes associated with weather, knowing that there's another season right around the corner.

Nursing is an ever-changing profession. We take on the challenge of caring for others day after day, often without a known path or outcome. But that doesn't stop us from being the best nurse we can be, and providing the best care we can provide. Many of us thrive on patient/family challenges: the critically ill postop Norwood with a myriad of IV pumps, open chest, requiring meticulous supervision and care; warfarin management for the outpatient toddler learning to walk; prolonged data analysis and manuscript writing on a topic of special interest; teaching and supporting a new nurse on her first day in the cath lab. SPCN members tackle these challenges each and every day. How do we support those around us? How do we engage with colleagues to improve care across institutions, across states, and around the globe? We make connections! Through SPCN membership, we can strengthen our profession and ourselves in so many ways. It's not a competition that we win as nurses. Those who benefit from our care, our research, our passion…they are the winners!

I have truly been blessed to be part of the SPCN board over the last decade. This has allowed me to meet exceptional nurses from all over who care for children with heart disease. Many new friendships have emerged and others have been strengthened. Take the next step as a member of SPCN, and become more involved. The benefits may surprise you! Invite a colleague to join and enjoy the benefits of membership as well. We are continuing our webinar series in April with the next transition topic. Everyone should have received an email from me with details and instructions for RSVPing for this 'FREE for members only' special event. Share the flyer with your coworkers and colleagues. Join together during the lunch hour to learn from experts on how to successfully transition out of interstage care. We are also planning two additional webinars for this year focused on transition from CHD to ACHD, to be presented in June and September. Look for more information to be shared soon.

If virtual meetings aren't your thing, but you LOVE social media, we have an opportunity for you! We are interested in expanding our presence beyond Facebook. We need warm, knowledgeable bodies to take that next step. Please reach out to me if you have an interest.

Lastly, we want to celebrate the marvelous things SPCN members are doing. Many of us don't like to 'toot our own horn,' but that's how we successfully share and learn from each other. Share your presentations, promotions, publications with Gwen Fosse or Michelle Steltzer. They will make sure the rest of the membership is updated. Only then can we celebrate together.