

Lessons from past presidents of the American Association of Neuroscience Nurses—It took nerve!

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Purpose

- The American Association of Neuroscience Nurses (AANN) celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2008. In preparation for this celebration a task force conducted video-taped interviews with past presidents of the association to obtain their historical perspectives.

Background

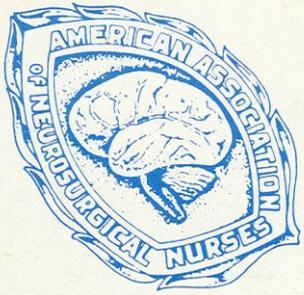
- The AANN was founded in 1968 as the American Association of Neurosurgical Nurses.
- The association was formed by a committee from the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS).

Methods

- Two of the researchers viewed each of the 17 interviews. Then usable interviews were transcribed. Content analysis was used to identify historical themes and influences on the AANN in it's first 40 years. The researchers also read early minutes from both the AANN and the AANS.

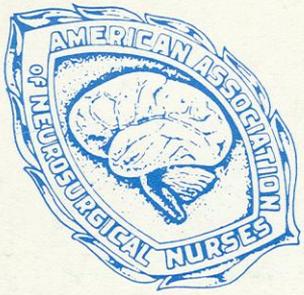
Results

- The themes that emerged about the historical evolution of AANN mirrored the human growth and development process.



Birth

- Seminars for Neurosurgical Nurses:
- “The possibility of seminars for neurosurgical nurses at the annual meeting was discussed. It was felt that perhaps 12 nurses who might be interested in such a project could be invited to make tentative plans for such a nurses’ organization under the auspices of the Harvey Cushing Society with meetings to run concurrently and bring plans to the Board of Directors at the next annual meeting for approval. It was felt that perhaps this could be an organization similar to that of the foreign delegates.”
 - April 17, 1967, minutes of the Board of Directors The Harvey Cushing Society, Inc. (The American Association of Neurological Surgeons).



October 4, 1967

- “The institution of a Section of Neurosurgical Nurses at the annual meeting was discussed, and it was voted: that the president appoint a committee to study this problem and to council the nurses in the formation of this ancillary group. Dr. Schwartz then appointed for this committee Dr. Paul Bucy, Dr. William Cove, and Dr. John Meagher, Dr. Bucy - Chairman.”
 - From the minutes of the Board of Directors The American Association of Neurological Surgeons (founded in 1931 as the Harvey Cushing Society).



The first decade

- “we were babies”_{MC}
- “here we were infants, didn’t have the vaguest idea of what we were doing”_{MC}
- “I was upset at the time, about all these challenges...I felt it was growing pains, is how I looked at it, they were all growing pains”_{MF}

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Adolescence

- Getting their own office space
- “So for us it became kind of adolescence, if you will, in our organization. Where it became time to think about, okay, are we ready to move out on our own?” CSA
- “ So it was a very pivotal move all the way around, it is like moving out, getting an apartment, for the first time living on your own, it is a little bit scary at the time too.” CSA

Adolescence

- Having annual meetings on their own, without AANS.
- “we were moving forward, we were growing; we were independent and were kind of defining our own existence a little bit better”
MR

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Adulthood

- “we weren’t financially in a position to do that ... because we were just trying to get ourselves, economically, on our feet again” NV
- “We also changed how we did our budget planning ...that budget really stood for the next two years, and the next year was the first year that we actually had a profit. We actually were not in the red, so the budget that we put together was a real realistic budget and I was real pleased that ... the president after me could actually get up at the business meeting and have good news to report, that we... were successful in making a profit, not a huge profit but a turn around.” NV



Adulthood

- “we had partnered with a management company. We had some money in the bank so we were literally not living pay check to pay check” CBR
- “now we were going to start growing again and laying that good foundation with the multiple management firm was a really critical step. We knew that was the direction we had to go, as far as AANN needing to survive.” TS
- “AANN has survived and thrived quite well since then” TS



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Conclusions

- This study adds to the growing body of knowledge about nursing specialty organizations.
- Remembering the origins of neuroscience nursing helps make connections with the past, present, and future of this specialty.



Implication

- In 2008 a list serve was started with the past presidents of the AANN so the current president had access to their expertise.



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