

the President's *pen*

by Mary Ann Shah, CNM, MS, FACNM
President

A Time to Listen, Learn, Share, and Rejoice

By the time this issue of *Quickening* arrives in your mailbox, last minute preparations for the ACNM 47th Annual Meeting & Exhibit will be well underway. Last year's annual meeting broke all records with over 2,150 participants in attendance; and we would love to see that number surpassed this year.



As one who has attended 30 ACNM annual meetings during my 33-year membership in the College, I always get psyched around this time of year. Anticipating the upcoming opportunities to reunite with friends and colleagues once again is only matched in enthusiasm by my desire to take away new pearls of wisdom from the wide array of enlightening presentations and exhibits and to be inspired anew by the voices of other members of our wonderful profession. I truly hope that this excitement is shared by most of you.

This year, we are piloting a new venture—a Breakout for Debates—which is explained as follows in the Advance Program:

As part of our commitment to maximize your opportunity to speak to your organization's leadership and to generate informed debate about issues critical to our mission, we invite you to attend a "breakout for debate" session. You will have the opportunity, in a small group setting, to hear differing opinions, expand your understanding of difficult issues, and make new friends. Members of the ACNM Board of Directors and staff will attend each meeting to answer questions and offer guidance on the preparation of motions for the Business Meetings.

Three one-hour "Breakout" sessions are planned, two with pre-selected topics ("Restructuring" on Sunday, May 26 at 1:45 p.m. and

"Business Ethics" on Monday, May 27 at 12:30 p.m.) and one "Open Forum" on Tuesday, May 28 at 1:30 p.m. These timeslots have been deliberately unopposed by education or business sessions to enable all who wish to participate to do so.

I would particularly encourage everyone to give some thought to the

issue of restructure as it relates to ACNM. Among the many decisions to be made are the following: BOD representation (e.g. regional representatives vs. delegates), lengths and terms of national office officers, election procedures, annual meetings of the College vs. other forums, etc. Please keep in mind that all restructuring proposals must be submitted as bylaws amendments to the ACNM membership and may be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the active members present and voting at any annual meeting. This process could take up to 2 more years and now is the time for YOU to have input. Wouldn't it be great if we could celebrate our 50th anniversary in 2005 with our new structure in place?

It is the BOD's hope that each of the breakout sessions will not only provide participants with the opportunity to "weigh in" on the issues that confront us, but that the climate will be receptive and respectful so that all will feel comfortable in expressing their views. Remember, "Midwives Listen to Women." Now, please, "Let's Listen to One Another." I would also request that we use the breakout sessions to not only address organizational "gripes" and "what's good for us," but to focus on the critical health and welfare issues confronting women in this country. We must strengthen our positions as advocates for women and families and here is our

Inside this issue...

◆ Find out why the U.S. receives a low grade for the second year in a row in report ranking the 50 states and District of Columbia on the health status of women.
Page 8

◆ Women with disabilities receive much needed services from **Cathy Caton, CNM**, and the new Comprehensive Healthcare Center for Women with Disabilities at Pittsburgh's Magee-Women's Hospital.
Page 12

◆ Jackson Memorial Health System in Miami, Florida receives the ACNM "With women, for a lifetime" Golden Commendation Award for 25 years of exemplary midwifery care.
Page 16

◆ ACNM member, **Cheryl Beck, CNM, DNSc**, designed the Postpartum Depression Screening Scale (PDSS) used widely across the nation. Learn how a midwife is setting the standard for Postpartum Depression screening.
Page 18

◆ Awards for Excellence Ballots inside. Act fast! Read about the candidates in your region and return the enclosed ballot by **May 10**.
Page 20

◆ Tell us what you think. Share your thoughts about your professional newsletter, *Quickening*. Log on to www.midwife.org or fax the enclosed survey to the national office.
Page 23

Quickening (ISSN 0196-3805) USPS 514030 is published bimonthly, with an additional special issue in the spring provided to members only, by the American College of Nurse-Midwives, 818 Connecticut Ave. NW, Ste. 900, Washington, DC 20006; 202-728-9860. Periodical Rate Postage paid at Washington, DC and other mailing locations. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Quickening*. This publication is the sole property of ACNM and the information herein may not be transferred or reproduced in any form whatsoever, including entering into electronic databases, without written permission.

opportunity to formulate a collective agenda on "what's best for women." Let's go for it!

We will also be repeating some successful launches from last year, particularly The Heart of Midwifery. Two 1-hour sessions will be held on Monday and Tuesday evenings at 8:30; each will be unique and members are cordially invited to attend one or both. As described in the Advance Program:

The world of CNMs and CMs is

continued on page 26

Proposed Change to ACNM Bylaws

by Ginger Breedlove, ACNM Bylaws Committee Chair

This year, ACNM members will see a change in how notice is given on upcoming bylaws amendments—the notice appears in *Quickening* instead of a separate mailing. Below you will see a proposed amendment that, if adopted, will allow students to be members of ACNM divisions. Students can already belong to committees, and the role of divisions has changed considerably over the past few years as new divisions have been created and many standing committees have become sections within divisions.

The ACNM Bylaws stipulate that proposed changes must be submitted to the membership at least 30 days prior to the annual business meeting on May 27, 2002. Members are urged to attend the annual meeting to make their voices heard on this and other issues.

Changes below are in *bold italic* print. For your reference, the current ACNM Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are included in the 2001 Membership Directory, beginning on page 12.

To make amendments to the proposed change, or to make other motions, please contact the parliamentarian at the annual meeting, prior to the business meeting. The parliamentarian will be available beginning May 26 to assist you in writing your amendment or motion.

ARTICLE III — MEMBERSHIP

Section 2. Privileges of Membership:

D. STUDENT members may serve on committees *and divisions* of the College but not as chairpersons. They may speak at annual meetings, but may not make motions, vote nor hold office.


ACOG Supports Epidural Pain Relief on Demand

In response to reports that some hospitals are denying epidural pain relief to women in labor until they have reached a certain stage of labor, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) reaffirmed its position that a woman's request for pain relief during any stage of labor is sufficient medical indication to provide it.

ACOG has received information that some hospitals are requiring that women in labor reach 4 to 5 centimeters (cm) of dilation before being given epidural pain relief. Hospitals are doing so because some studies have indicated that the risk of cesarean delivery is increased when epidurals are given early in labor. ACOG supports waiting, when feasible, to give laboring women epidurals until they have dilated 4 - 5 cm. However, since

labor produces severe pain for many women, ACOG believes that a woman's request for an epidural should be the deciding factor, even if she hasn't yet reached 4 - 5 cm dilation.

ACOG reaffirms its earlier committee opinion, published jointly with the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA), that while under a physician's care, in the absence of a medical contraindication, women in labor should be given pain relief upon request. According to ACOG/ASA, there is no other circumstance where it is considered acceptable for a person to experience untreated severe pain that is amenable to safe intervention.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists is the national medical organization representing nearly 40,000 physicians who provide health care for women. 


President's Pen

from page 3

filled with unsung heroines and heroes. Individual ACNM members who communicate, by their actions, what's in their hearts and heads as they serve women around the world...bring honor to our profession, inspire us, and validate our commitment to preserve the midwifery philosophy of care, and create legends that must be shared.

Another success introduced in 2001, repeated this year, is the Awards Ceremony held on Saturday at 5:30 p.m. Please join us in honoring more than 40 ACNM members who will receive student scholarships, faculty recognitions, and writing awards. Immediately following, at 6:45 p.m., the Hattie Hemschemeyer and Kitty Ernst Awards and the induction of new Fellows into the College will continue to be featured traditions at the Opening Celebration. You will also have the opportunity, at your respective Regional Meetings on Sunday at 5:15 p.m., to applaud your local colleagues whose outstanding achievements have earned them your votes for the Regional Awards for Excellence. In my opinion, the only thing more exhilarating than having your work recognized by your colleagues is having them present to witness and acknowledge the presentation.

The annual Student Social will also be held on Tuesday evening at 8:30. It is hoped that students will take advantage of this opportunity to meet with some of the "mothers" of the College and to hear them personally recount, in their own words, some important pieces of ACNM history.

Although it is tempting to highlight every session planned for the annual meeting, each of you should have received the Advance Program and can review for yourselves the innumerable continuing education opportunities and inspirational moments that await you. I would just like to leave you with a personal invitation to join us in Atlanta, May 24-30, 2002 so that together we can "listen, learn, share, and rejoice." See you then! 

mashah@acnm.org