

Oh, I do love spring! Everything's green and the lilacs and tulips are blooming and it's time to start reminding employees that beachwear belongs at the lake and not at the hospital! The pedicure patrols are out in force!

### A Trivia Tidbit

At five minutes and six seconds after 4:00 A.M. on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July this year, the time and date will be: **04:05:06 07/08/09**. This will never happen again.

### Chapter Conferences

Another thing that happens in the spring is that many chapters have spring conferences or annual meetings. Ohio and Indiana chapters were held the same weekend in March, Wisconsin met in mid-April, and Central Illinois met the last weekend of April. I was fortunate to be able to attend both Indiana and Wisconsin.

Indiana's conference was in Indianapolis. They said that both attendance and sponsorship were down slightly. They had a great vendor expo, though, with enthusiastic partners. Speakers talked about employee monitoring, wellness, disaster preparedness, magnet programs, and a legal update. They hold their business meeting over lunch, electing and installing officers and hearing committee reports. I was intrigued by their historian and their chapter awards.



## ISHHRA Annual Meeting



**ISHHRA Board Members**

Bruce Tisdale, who is Indiana's President-Elect and is pictures above, second from right in the front row, is very proud of his unique designation as the only person he is aware of who has been President-Elect in two centuries. He previously served as President-Elect and then moved before he began his presidential responsibilities. Having now returned to Indiana, he is again President-Elect!

Wisconsin met at The Abbey in Lake Geneva, which is where I went on my honeymoon in a previous life. It's a beautiful location, and both attendance and vendor participation was good. Sue talks about the conference in her Wisconsin update below, so I'll let her share the details.

I left my camera at The Abbey, and hadn't taken many pictures anyway, so no WI photos this time.

### **ASHHRA Leadership Conference**

Most of your Chapter Leaders met for a day and a half with Regional Consultants, Board members, Committee chairpersons, and ASHHRA staff at the Annual Leadership Conference, held Wednesday and Thursday, May 6-7 in Chicago. We had many opportunities to network as a Region and the second day there was an opportunity to get together by chapter size as well. The opportunity to find out what other chapters are doing and to find out that our problems and concerns aren't unique was one of the best benefits of the event.

We heard about lots of ASHHRA programs and projects, including: the mentoring program, myashhra.org, ASHHRA's strategic priorities/plan, the annual conference, and the ASHHRA foundation. We heard from Les Abercrombie, Advocacy Chair about the Hill visit, which is going on as I'm writing this. And John Ostrum talked about the Chapter Management Award's change in format. He asked for everyone's patience and understanding as we work with this new format for the first few years until we get some feedback and made it work for everyone. We also had an opportunity to hear about the best practices of many chapters, facilitated by Karen Burk. At the end of Day One, many Region 5 leaders enjoyed Chicago-style pizza at Lou Malnati's - yum!



**Region 5 Leaders**, L to R: Mary Beth Knake, OH; Bruce Tisdale, IN; Carol Bank, RC; Linda Moore, Central IL; Karen Sagar, IN; Carrie Mull, Central IL; Sue Edminster, WI

ASHHRA provides this conference to the leaders of all chapters who have signed affiliation agreements. Many chapters choose to pay for their presidents-elect to attend as well. It's a great way to prepare your officers to lead and grow your organizations.



**Regional Consultants**, L to R: Barry Lindemann, Chapter Officer Director; Ken Brown, Region 6; Grace Moffitt, Region 3; Karmen Reid, Chair; Karen Burks, Region 4; John Ostrum, Region 8, Carol Bank, Region 5.

**[www.myASHHRA.org](http://www.myASHHRA.org)**

As I mentioned in the last issue, ASHHRA is in the process of introducing an online community site, [www.myASHHRA.com](http://www.myASHHRA.com). Sharon Allen presented information about this tool at the Leadership Conference, and another demo is being presented later this month.

I'm sure you'll be hearing more about this shortly from your Chapter Presidents. What a great way to link with other healthcare HR professionals. More info to come.....

**Advocacy Update**

I'm delighted to include an article by Doug Jontz, who is Region 5's representative on ASHHRA's Advocacy Committee. As I said earlier, the Advocacy Committee is in Washington as I write this and will go to the Hill, along with AHA staffers, on Tuesday.

After years of relative quiet on the federal labor legislative front, the past several months have more than made up for those times! Of course, the most famous and hotly-debated of these proposed changes is the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). This debate has become national and intense. Briefly, it would require an employer to recognize a union if a majority of the employees in the bargaining unit signed union recognition cards. This

would circumvent the secret ballot election, a foundational principle in the current law. It would also require federally-mandated arbitration if an employer and a union were not able to reach agreement through the collective bargaining process in just 120 days. Lastly, it would increase fines and penalties if the NLRB found an employer committed unfair labor practices, but no changes are proposed regarding union unfair labor practices.

This legislation – which is politically polarizing (generally supported by Democrats and opposed by Republicans) - has received increased attention over the past several years and its passage has been at the top of the labor unions' priority list. Although the bill passed the House of Representatives in 2007, there were an insufficient number of supporters in the Senate to gain cloture. (Cloture is the Senate procedure that allows a bill to be brought to the floor for an up-or-down vote. It requires 60 votes.) In addition, President Bush had promised a veto of this legislation.

With President Obama promising to sign this bill into law, and with increased number of Labor-support Democrat candidates winning House and Senate races, House and Senate Democrat leaders have worked to move forward this bill. Given the history of the need for cloture, the House did not take the lead on this bill as they had in 2007. While they have sufficient votes to pass the bill, their members were reluctant to go on record until the Senate had gained the necessary 60 votes. At the start of the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, Democrats enjoyed a 58-41 edge in the Senate (Minnesota's Senate race between Norm Coleman and Al Franken is not yet resolved), but needed two Republicans to cross party lines. Former Republican Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter had previously indicated a willingness to support the bill in 2007. With the labor unions pushing hard for support and employer associations, including ASHHRA and the U.S. Chambers of Commerce, pushing hard against it, the pressure on the more liberal Republicans and the more conservative Democrats became increasingly intense. However, that dynamic changed several weeks ago, when, to the surprise of many, Senator Specter not only reversed his previous position and stated in a speech on the Senate Floor that he would oppose EFCA in its present state, but also switched parties and became a Democrat. Since that time, Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) has gone on record as also opposing the bill in its present state.

There is much speculation swirling around this bill – Will Senator Specter's recent party switch cause him to change his position on EFCA? (In his speech announcing this switch, he specifically stated that he would not change his position on EFCA.) Will the labor unions try for "second best", settling for some lesser type of labor reform? (This could include the so-called "quickie" elections in which the election is held 7 – 10 days following the filing of the petition and union access to workers at the employment site). Will the labor unions wait until the 2010 elections and try to secure 60 seats in the Senate and then press for passage of EFCA in its current state? (This could mean holding their current majority and adding more seats, as well as the possibility of Franken winning in Minnesota and Specter changing his position.)

There are other bills being considered:

- The RESPECT Act (S. 969/H.R. 1644), which would amend the National Labor Relations Board's current guidance on the definition of "supervisors". (This includes Charge Nurses.)
- The Registered Nurse Safe Staffing Act (S.54), which would provide federally mandated staffing ratios for healthcare workers.
- Nurse Staffing Standards for Patient Safety and Quality Care Act (H.R. 2273) amending the Public Health Service Act to establish direct care Registered Nurse –to-patient staffing ratio requirements.
- The Nurse and Patient Safety & Protection Act of 2007 was introduced last year and is expected to be introduced again this year. This would require hospitals to eliminate all manual lift of patients by hospital employees, except when there is a "declared state of emergency".

There is a lot of activity in federal labor legislation, much of which is very unfavorable to healthcare employees and employers. It's imperative that we make our voices known, on behalf of our patients, our employees and our employers. We'll plan to keep you posted. Stay informed! Contact your representatives!

### **Chapter Leader Conference Calls**

The Chapter Presidents from all of the Region 5 chapters have scheduled conference calls every other month to keep us up to date on what's happening within our Region so we can share that with all of you and to share your ideas and concerns with the ASHHRA staff. Our next call is scheduled for Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. CST.

We share program ideas, questions about ASHHRA award requirements, and chapter management suggestions.

### **Met Life Scholarships**

Met Life will again be sponsoring a scholarship for participation in the annual conference. This is the third year that one person from each of our nine regions has been able to attend the conference due to Met Life's generosity. The amount has been increased to \$1,500. Please check the website or call me for more details about the requirements and to hear the stories of last year's scholarship winners. I hope we have many applicants from Region 5! The winner does not have to be a member of ASHHRA, so share the information with your colleagues. The deadline for applications to be received is June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Member Recognition and ASHHRA Awards**

Speaking of deadlines, the date for submission of the Chapter Management Award information has been extended to June 30<sup>th</sup>, so you have a little more time. Regional Consultants will be meeting in July to review the submissions for all awards.

### **Upcoming National Conferences**

2009 - 11/1 - 11/3 - Chicago, IL - Hyatt Regency  
2010 - 9/25 - 9/28 - Tampa, FL - Marriott Waterside  
2011 - September - Phoenix, AZ - Sheraton Downtown

### News from your Chapters

Central Illinois Society of Healthcare Human Resource Administration, Southern Illinois Healthcare Human Resources Administration, Indiana Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration, Michigan Healthcare Human Resources Administration, and Ohio Society of Hospital Human Resources Administrators

No reports.

### Wisconsin Society of Healthcare Human Resources Administration

The Wisconsin Chapter held its annual conference April 22-24th at The Abbey in Lake Geneva. Our keynote speaker was Liz Jazwiec who is a faculty speaker from The Studer Group. Liz spoke on Accountability: Turning Limited Resources into Results. Some of you may remember hearing her at last year's national conference in Austin. The conference also offered two best practice sessions from WSHHRA members, breakout sessions, and legal, legislative and ASHHRA updates. Conference attendance was strong, and the support from vendors was appreciated. At our Board meeting we selected The Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake for our 2010 conference location and the Glacier Canyon Lodge/Wilderness Hotel in Wisconsin Dells for 2011.

The Board is working diligently to submit for ASHHRA Chapter awards and nominated Randy Schade for recognition of the Chapter Officer Award and Janelle Markgraf for Outstanding Chapter Achievement Award. We had our highest number of scholarship applicants ever and selected a talented student pursuing Human Resources as a profession for our 2009 recipient.

Elections were held at our Business Meeting, and we welcomed a new Board member, Kim Plautz to her role. Janelle Markgraf was recognized for her many years of service to the WSHHRA Board.

### Calendar of Events

6/30	Chapter Management Award applications due - <b>THIS IS A CHANGE!</b>
7/16-17	Regional Consultants meet to review award applications
10/31	ASHHRA Annual Conference pre-conference workshops
11/1-3	ASHHRA Annual Conference, New Heights for HR Leaders, Chicago Hyatt Regency Hotel

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