

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A FUN CHALLENGE, BECOME PART OF A CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE!

Kudos to Catherine Hawn and all of the members of the 2014 ORNAA Conference planning committee. Our SCORNA region did a wonderful job of planning and organization.

Way back in the '90s, I was the exhibitor chair for one of the provincial conferences in B.C. For those of you who were mere children or those of us whose memory gets slightly fuzzy with the details of a multitude of years, that was before computers and cell phones! Let me rephrase that...having to use snail mail and land-line telephones.

Can you imagine how tedious that process was? First of all, I couldn't google the addresses for the companies or the people to contact. I had to make phone calls and send letters by surface mail and wait for them to respond!

I had a large floorplan of the exhibit hall made and put people in their requested areas as the responses came in. In those days, the vendor companies were like hockey teams. Everyone had been with their original teams for years, there were no trades or acquisitions and everybody had their own product niche.

Then things started to change! There were mergers, acquisitions, companies had product lines that they'd never had before. Suddenly, company A couldn't be beside company B because they had a competing product, and C couldn't be beside D, and so on, and so on.

What I would have given for email, quick responses and a computerized spreadsheet. What I got was relationships with nurses and vendors that have spanned decades and every conference is like old home week.

I have been actively involved in provincial and national conferences since 1985 and have held many positions in regional groups. 1985 was my first national in Vancouver. Next year's in Edmonton will be my 30 year anniversary of professional OR involvement. Celebration time!

Seriously, people ask why would you spend so much time on a volunteer basis? It's selfish, really. Where else do you get to work, learn, network, validate your professional practice, dress like normal people and do the occasional partying with an amazing group of people?

You deserve it! Reward yourself. Get involved at any level and have fun with it!

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Lifeso