



# The Networker

The Official Newsletter of the Network for Lesbian, Gay,  
Bisexual & Transgender Concerns in Occupational Therapy

VOLUME 15/NUMBER 1/MARCH 2008

## FROM THE CO-CHAIR by Susan Roberts

## FROM THE CO-CHAIR by Kay Blöse

*Please Join Us  
at our  
Annual Meeting*

*Friday, April 11  
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm*

**Westin Hotel  
Ocean Ballroom**

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Of all the AOTA conferences I have attended over the past 35 years, the 2005 conference in Long Beach was the best. I had an agenda, to learn more about private practice, and as usual the workshops and exhibit halls met my needs.

I paid my own way, as I have for most of my career, and cut costs by taking the midnight train from Tucson and sharing my room at the Marriot (which has the best beds) with three recent grads, who also had tight budgets. My roommates provided an added benefit - I got to see the conference through fresh eyes.

They all looked forward to the Slagle lecture, so of course I had to go. Without their enthusiasm, I might have missed Suzanne Peloquin's marvelous multimedia presentation, "Embracing Our Ethos, Reclaiming Our Heart". It brought tears and made us all proud to have chosen this profession.

Even better, I sent several of them (all straight) ahead to scout

Well, I am running like a fool trying to get my presentation ready for conference in a few weeks. I am so glad I never wait until the last minute to get anything done!

First order of business: the Network Annual Meeting at the AOTA Conference in Long Beach is being held on Friday, April 11, 2008, from 7 - 9pm. It will be held in the WLB Ocean Ballroom. I hope you can all make it to the meeting so we can get some business done and then head off to have some fun in Long Beach.

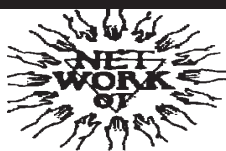
Second: There will be flyers announcing the meeting posted all over the conference center, so watch for them.

Third: If you know of any LGBT topics or presenters that should be supported, please let us so we can show up en masse.

Fourth: There will be a meeting of the Multi-Cultural Coalition on Thursday morning. This is the umbrella group that encompasses all the ethnic, LGBT and disabled

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**Network for Lesbian,  
Gay and Bisexual  
Concerns in  
Occupational Therapy**

“The Mission of the Network is to create the means for members of the occupational therapy professional community who are committed to advancing an understanding of sexual orientation issues to identify, support and mentor one another and to promote research in occupational therapy.”

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out the LGBT meeting before I got there. How were people dressed? Any women? Anybody cute? They happily went off and reported back. For me, this may have been one of the best moments.

I came out during my first level II psychiatric fieldwork and attended my first AOTA conference in Philadelphia in 1975. I recognized only my classmates and professors – and to the best of my knowledge, none of them were “gay” or “lesbian”. A year or so later, I attended another conference in Washington, DC with my first girlfriend. We got called names in the street and a threat of violence hung in the air.

My third conference I went to San Francisco with my girlfriend, another OT this time. She had 10 years on me and she whispered the names of OT’s she knew were “gay”, “lesbian”, or “trans”. A high profile OT in the military had lived for years passing as another man’s “wife”, even in a bathing suit. As a Philly

OT, my girlfriend had heard stories about Helen Willard and Clare Spackman (one of whom was known affectionately to refer to her partner as “moose”). At an exhibit booth we made buttons that said, “I know you know” and “We ain’t got it easy, but we got it”, phrases from current Lesbian Feminist music that would make us visible to others familiar with those songs. We met no one.

What a great feeling, a quarter of a century later, to feel comfortable “coming out” to supportive “straight” OTs who loved the “dishy” stories of famous LGBT OTs as much as I did. How exciting to walk into a room full of kindred spirits at a Network meeting and to know we have a recognized LGBT group within AOTA – with our own buttons even!

I am sorry to miss this year’s conference in Long Beach, but my thoughts will be with you. I know it will be a rich experience. I hope to see everyone again next year. Let’s plan a dance!

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**The Networker** is published quarterly by the Network Steering Committee.

Subscription Price: The Networker is sent to all members.

**Membership is defined as making a donation in any amount.**

To join, send application on page 6 to The Network

167 High Street, Westerly, RI 02891

## FUN IN THE SUN AND PDUS ARE AWAITING YOU...

... at this year's AOTA Conference and Expo in Long Beach, California! It appears the conference's format aligns with our profession's knowledge base that we all have different learning styles and attention spans. The variety of learning opportunities include:

- 3-hour workshops,
- 90-minute short courses,
- 60-minute research platforms,
- 30-minute research papers, and
- Poster sessions.

With these learning opportunities come the professional development units (PDUs) necessary to maintain OTR and COTA certifications. In addition to the above education sessions, PDUs are also available by attending other Conference highlights like the Eleanor Clarke Slagle Lecture and collaborative breakfasts. Up to 24 PDUs can be earned via the conference registration fee. This is phenomenal considering the caliber of presenters and vast range of topics (25 primary focus areas) available for an average cost of \$255 (depending on one's AOTA membership status and student/professional status). That is less than many continuing education courses focusing on a single subject.

The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) also recognizes the diverse needs of occupational therapy personnel when it comes to professional development. Our national certifying body requires re-certification every 3 years in order to remain active in good standing (except for those who were certified initially in 2003). In order to renew, the applicant must have accrued at least thirty-six professional development units in the previous 3 years. Half of these PDUs must come from events that directly enhance one's occupational therapy skills or knowledge, and the other half may come from areas that are not directly related to occupational therapy but otherwise impact one's current professional role. Many

workshops measure their units in CEUs (continuing educational units), but NBCOT uses PDUs. To translate, 1 CEU equals 10 contact hours, which is worth 10 PDUs. The following is a summary of NBCOT's acceptable PDU activities:

- Reading peer-reviewed, role related professional journal articles and writing an annotated bibliography;
- Formal academic coursework;
- Independent learning with an assessment element (online courses, self-study series);
- Completing a Self Assessment and Professional Development Plan;
- Volunteering to promote one's OT skills;
- Presenting a professional poster, or in-service presentation for related professionals;
- Level I or II fieldwork supervision;
- Being in a mentoring relationship with another related professional or student;
- Publishing in an occupational therapy or related field textbook, journal, research paper, or non-peer reviewed professional publication

The 2008 Certification Renewal Handbook can be found at [www.nbcot.org](http://www.nbcot.org).

Conference is not just about formal educational sessions, though. This annual event travels across our country, creating a space that uplifts and energizes our profession. It brings together clinicians and students of varied backgrounds, specialties, and interests in a fun atmosphere that not only raises our knowledge, but also rekindles the spark within us. That interpersonal connection reminds us why we go out everyday and offer our time and energy in service to facilitate growth and health within our communities.

For more information, go to <http://www.aota.org/ConfandEvents.aspx>

-- by Jessica Miller

## SOME CONFERENCE SESSIONS THAT HAVE DIVERSITY AS A THEME

Selected by Ken Dechman

### Thursday, April 10

8:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

WS 105 Renaissance Ballroom IV-V

Navigating Paths to Leadership in Diverse Arenas: International & Cultural Issues

Cynthia Hughes-Harris, PhD

This workshop is targeted to practitioners, educators, and students who are interested in issues of cultural competence, inclusion, and diversity as they relate to the development of leadership skills within the profession. Didactic and interactive methods to influence “at-the-table” decision-making will be explored.

Poster Sessions 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

PO 132: Promoting Occupational Therapy in Post-Communist Romania: Building Infrastructures To Meet the Needs of Persons With Disabilities

Renee Mcdannel, PhD

### Friday, April 11

Poster Sessions 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

PO 237: A Comparison of Three Cultures: Occupational Justice Challenges and Approaches to Disability, Violence, and Poverty for Women Around the World

Tamera Humbert, EdD

1:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

SC 215 Conv Ctr Seaside Ballroom B

Journey Through a Multicultural Course: Student and Faculty Perspectives

Lavonne Fox, PhD; Debra Byram, PhD; Janet Jedlicka, PhD; Amber Harvey; Brooke Kohler; and Andrea Kuhn

There is a need for cultural competence in health care, but there are significant challenges to the teaching of cultural competence in healthcare curricula. Pedagogical challenges and instructional strategies used in a multicultural course and the impact of the educational experiences on students and faculty will be highlighted.

1:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

RP 223 Conv Ctr Seaside I

Home Away from Home: Bridging Conflicts Between Self and Identity Among Filipino Migrants

Terry Peralta-Catipon, PhD

Based on two qualitative studies, one of Filipino workers in Hong Kong and of Filipino seniors in Los Angeles, this paper shows how participants bridged conflicts of self and identity through transcendental links to their homeland. The discussion explores how a “home away from home” could be a tool for program development addressing migrant adaptation.

(Res) Cross-Cultural Occupational Therapy: The Client’s Voice

Peggy M. Martin, MS; Contributing Author: Rosemarie J. Park, PhD

A phenomenological approach was used to bring understanding to the experience of five individuals who received occupational therapy services and were racially or ethnically different from their therapist. Four main themes emerged and offer a framework to interpret the therapist-client relationship.

1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

WS 215 Hyatt Beacon Ballroom A

International Forum: Global Occupational Participation: Realities and Contexts for Practicing Internationally

Maria Skouroliakos, MSc, Levadia, Greece; Mary Evert; Tamera Humbert, DED; Patricia Coker, MHS; Jerry Burik, MHS; Donna Costa, DHS; Kathleen Murphy; Kimberley Persons, MHS, OTR/L.

Level: Intermediate

This panel presentation will focus on the impact of occupational therapy in a variety of cultures throughout the world and lessons learned while striving to provide services within a “globally connected, diverse workforce” as outlined in the Centennial Vision.

12:30 p.m.–1:15 p.m.

Home & Community Health SIS roundtable discussion Providing Culturally Relevant Community-Based Occupational Therapy Services

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Terry Olivas-De La O, COTA/C  
Community-based services must be culturally relevant to be effective and benefit their clients. This roundtable will describe and discuss such services.

*Poster Sessions 2:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.*

PO 290: The Occupational Therapist's Role in Acute Care Discharge Planning With the Non-Insured, Minority, Brain-Injured Population  
Shawna Rafferty, OTR/L and Cynthia Jaeger, OTR/L

*7:00 p.m.– 9:00 p.m.*

**Annual meeting of THE NETWORK FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER CONCERNS IN OT**  
**WLB Ocean Ballroom**

**Saturday, April 12**

*7:00 a.m.– 8:00 a.m.*

**Multiculturalism, Diversity and Inclusion Network Leadership**  
HR Harbor BC

*Poster Sessions 1:30 p.m.–3:30 p.m.*

PO 327: Occupational Therapy and Climate Change: Exploring Regional Therapists' Experiences, Attitudes, and Professional Guidance  
Donald Chase; David Wartman; and Amy Killingsworth

**Sunday, April 13**

*9:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.*

SC 406 Conv Ctr 102C  
Occupational Therapy Intervention in Post-Institutionalized Adopted Children  
Sheryl Ryan, MA, Desiree Go, MA, OTR/L  
Occupational therapists are increasingly encountering children who have been adopted from orphanages. This short course will discuss current literature and use case studies to illustrate the developmental trends among post-institutionalized children. It will also overview research on the effects of sensory deprivation on early development.

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practitioner networks and caucuses in AOTA. Hope you can attend. Look in the program for the location.

Lastly, let me offer a salute to the LGBT folks who helped the Network out of the closet, well out of the hotel room, and on to the conference floor in 1990. We are now recognized as valued members of the diverse occupational therapy community.

Agenda items for the annual meeting so far include the following:

1. Revising our mission statement
2. Making a contribution to the Wilma West Library in the name of the Network
3. Progress on the Network Scholarship Fund
4. Support for the Marriage as an Occupation Amendment, to be presented to the RA
5. Visions for the future

If you would like anything else added please contact me at [kblose55@hotmail.com](mailto:kblose55@hotmail.com). If you can't join us but have issues you would like to see discussed email me at the same address.

**HOPE TO  
SEE YOU  
AT  
OUR  
2008  
ANNUAL  
MEETING  
IN  
LONG BEACH!**

## NEW YEAR'S SKANKY SWAP

by Michael Davison

It all started when we had a traditional Yankee Swap at work with the ensuing years of receiving re-gifted wedding gifts from the young, recent brides. Year after year, I would just wrap up the very same gift I had received from the previous year's swap. Then someone started the trend of bringing really tacky items - ones in truly 'poor taste'! One staff member even brought used books from a garage sale....

At that point it dawned on me to rename it a "Skanky Swap" - declaring that one person's skank is another person's treasure. The tradition of exchanging tacky gifts continued with the proverbial Scrabble game being the booby prize every year.

The idea was passed along to the North East Chapter of the Network and a Skanky Swap has become a new year's tradition for us - I think 2008 was about our 6th or 7th. The photo shows this year's skank and its givers. We have flourished into purveyors of the truly ridiculous and tasteless.

The prize this year went to some slippers with individual toes trimmed with magenta boa fur, and the prize several years ago went to a pink flamingo lamp made of rubber that smelled disgusting when it got hot. That treasured number has remained stubbornly on one member's shelf at home - she refuses to re-gift it.....



The 2008 Skanky Swappers

### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

- New Application to join the Network
- Renewal donation (please note changes in your information)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

(WHERE YOU WANT CORRESPONDENCE AND THE NETWORKER SENT)

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_ AOTA Member # \_\_\_\_\_

(We let AOTA know how many AOTA members we have on our list to gain their continued support for the Network.)

Please check one of the categories below:

*Membership is defined as those who have given a donation.*

Check your donation:

**OTR** (Suggested donation \$15)       **COTA** (Suggested donation \$15)

**Student** (Suggested donation \$10)       **Institution** (Suggested donation \$20)

I would like my name on the distributed list.

*(Distributed to Network members only, for networking among ourselves.)*

I would like my name on the NON-distributed list.

*(You will receive the newsletter and will not appear on the distributed member list.)*

*Please make check payable to "NETWORK" and mail to:*

Michael Nardone, 167 High Street, Westerly, RI 02891