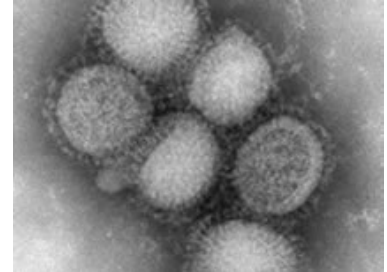


## H1N1 Plagues School Nurses in Idaho

School Nurses in Idaho have been dealing with the H1N1 virus in many ways this fall. Some schools had low attendance days when the virus struck in their community and a few school districts were closed for a several days while students and staff recuperated. The importance of hand washing has been



emphasized to staff and students to combat the spread and some schools have made hand gel available. Influenza like illnesses are continuing to be reported throughout the state. This coincides with the national report from the CDC. Over eighty per cent of patients who require hospitalization have underlying conditions. The highest number of hospitalizations have been in children less than 10 years of age. This supports the importance of immunizing young children to prevent severe H1N1 disease. To keep up with the latest information check [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) or the Idaho Dept of Health and Welfare for the latest statistics .

Health districts across the state have set up clinics both private and in the schools to immunize children and those at high risk. Public as well as school clinics will continue into the New Year.

### Fall Conference Highlights

Pam Thompson, the opening speaker for this fall's Annual Conference told us: "If you do great things, more will come." If you missed the Fall Conference , you missed an entire slate of great speakers both days. This year for the first time, the conference was held on Friday and Saturday at the Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort Hotel in Worley, Idaho with about 40 attendees.

Friday's speakers gave information about preventing child sexual abuse , immunizations, the dental emergencies, ADHD, H1N1 preparations, mental health and the Germ City educational program. Saturday featured speakers who helped us to understand milk allergy vs lactose intolerance, childhood cancer and its effects on children returning to school, the Shriner's hospitals, the importance of vision screening, and identifying rashes.

**Shelva Gaudette was chosen as the School Nurse of the Year for 2010.**

New officers elected were: President elect Susie Schriver and Secretary-Treasurer: CJ Wilkinson.

**Business meeting:** SNOI will pay for the current president to be a member of the Idaho Nurses Association. SNOI will pay up to \$1200 a year for the President Elect to attend the NASN conference. If the President is unable to attend the money will be divided among a minimum of 2 up to 3 randomly selected SNOI members who attended the previous fall conference.

## Message from NASN Director\_JoAnn Blout

December 2009

I hope all Idaho School Nurses are having a good year. I know you are busy! H1N1 flu concerns continue to take up our time in addition to the regular school nursing duties and projects we are involved in during the fall of each school year. I wish you all the best as you work in your schools.

NASN's new president, Sandi Delack, was installed in June at the annual NASN conference. Sandi's theme for her two years in office is Vision, Voice, and Visibility – Charting the Course for a Healthy Future. This school year, as never before, school nurses are very **visible** as we care for, identify, track, and report students with Influenza Like Illnesses in our schools; support our local health departments with H1N1 flu vaccine clinics; and work within pandemic flu guidelines. This visibility gives us an opportunity to **voice** our concerns and ask for support at local, state, and national levels. As we meet with students, parents, administrators, community leaders, health department officials, and legislators at all levels of government it is important that we know our **vision** for the future of school nursing. What is your vision of your School Nursing practice? What are you doing to make that vision possible?

**NASN can help you achieve your vision of your practice in School Nursing.**

NASN provides opportunities for continuing education. Each month members receive either the Journal of School Nursing or the NASN School Nurse magazine in the mail. Both contain articles that help us improve our practice or tell us what other school nurses across the nation are doing in their practices. Through the NASN website members have access to free or discounted CNEs (CEUs) on current topics of interest to school nurses. NASN's annual conference is 4 to 6 days packed full of education specifically for school nurses and our practice. Additionally, NASN staff members present workshops on a variety of school nurse topics in different areas of the country. Have you listened to NASN on the Radio? Go to the NASN website and listen to the latest short radio presentation. Topics are current, and many are suitable for educating staff or parents.

NASN is visible and advocates for school nurses.

Weekly members receive via e-mail the NASN Weekly Digest with short articles of interest to school nurses, and information about NASN staff members' activities as they work behind the scenes or attend meetings and conferences representing NASN to promote school nurse issues. I am always surprised by the number of meetings and speaking opportunities NASN staff have to represent us and our interests. Two bills are being introduced right now, one in the House and one in the Senate, that would provide money to study the effects of school nurse to student ratios related to student readiness to learn and achievement. NASN supports these bills, along with many other groups, and the bills are receiving bi-partisan support in congress.

If you wish to contact Senators Risch or Crapo or Representatives Simpson or Minnick about these bills, the Senate Bill is S 2750 and the House Bill is H.R. 2730.

NASN provides resources for school nurses.

Resources in many forms including: education for staff and parents through Tools for Schools kits with fact sheets and handouts on various topics; frequently updated information on H1N1, MRSA, environmental health, Disaster Preparedness; higher education opportunities in nursing, research grants, recent research topics, and evidence based practice for school nurses; information about your professional scope and standards of practice, awards, scholarships, and employment opportunities; and books and other publications and “free stuff for school nurses”.

I strongly encourage all school nurses to join SNOI and NASN. It is easy to do on the NASN website: [www.nasn.org](http://www.nasn.org) NASN and SNOI are **your** professional organizations. If you need help with the annual dues, approach your PTA or local Lions Club for funds. Point out that a single student who uses one of your VSP Sight for Student gift certificates, available to you with your membership, more than pays for the \$119.50 NASN/SNOI annual dues.

My best to you all,  
JoAnn Blout RN NCSN  
NASN Director from SNOI

## **From the SNOI President: Helen Root**

First I want to thank the conference committee for putting together our fall conference. It was great. You did a fantastic job. I know Denise Driver and her committee are already busy working on the conference for next year.

I'm sure we've all been seeing sicker kids in the health office and hope everyone has survived the first round of H1N1. The experts say it will be coming back. If you have any good tips about how you handled it, let me know and I'll pass them along. It is great that we can all learn from each other. While we always stress prevention and personal responsibility, 48% of workers do not have paid sick leave. It is simple to us but a difficult choice for parents to make on whether to stay home and lose money or send an ill child to school. This is one of the challenges of school nursing.

Thank you for all the positive comments concerning the questions I sent out about the certification test. One comment from the conference evaluation was concerning help with the test. I hope to make it seem like something you will pass, which it is. I will continue to send out questions for you. Find someone that also wants to become certified and study together. There are only 20 NCSNs in Idaho. This is 0.61 % (yes, less than 1%) according to the National Board that extends certification. I know we care enough about our personal commitment to our profession and students to make certification a goal. Contact Faith Miller [miller.faith@meridianschools.org](mailto:miller.faith@meridianschools.org) for requirements to take the test.

Don't forget that NASN offers free and low cost CEUs online. Please email me with your comments or concerns about SNOI and how we can help you succeed.

Have a wonderful holiday season.

Helen Root, RN, MHS, NCSN  
hroot@nsd131.org

## **Idaho School Nurse of the Year 2010**

### **Shelva Gaudette**

Shelva Gaudette has been a school nurse since 1996 and has worked at all levels of school nursing but prefers high school. She currently is the nurse for Mountain View High School in the Meridian School District. After graduating from Boise State University she spent 8 years in the Air Force and then switched to the Idaho Air National Guard and has been in the military for a total of 26 years. She is married and has two grown children. She likes to read, work in her flower garden and do crafts.

### **Save the Date:**

## **Fall Conference 2010 will be October 7th and-8th**

The Conference Committee from District 3 planning it! More details to come in the next newsletter.

## **Something to Smile About for Idaho Educators**

Each year in the U.S., students lose over 51 million school hours to dental issues that could be prevented. To help, Delta Dental of Idaho offers a variety of free dental health resources for Idaho educators.

### **Chew On This!**

#### **Book of Classroom Activities**

A compilation of classroom activities on understanding and preventing cavities and gum disease, the dental risks of eating disorders, piercings, drug use, smoking and smokeless tobacco, etc. Book is yours to keep and share.

#### **Captain Supertooth**

Captain Supertooth uses his superpowers to teach and motivate K-2<sup>nd</sup> graders to care for their teeth. Interactive presentation is given at your school for approximately 100 students. Presentation is 20 minutes and includes free

toothbrushes, two-minute timers and tooth brushing charts for students. Priority is given to schools where 50% or more students qualify for free or reduced lunches.

### **Baby's Healthy Teeth**

For educators working with pregnant teens, we offer a DVD in English and Spanish highlighting the importance of good dental health during pregnancy and for the baby's first few years. Information is straightforward and practical. The DVD is twenty minutes long. Brochures in English and Spanish are also available.

### **Let's Get Mouthy**

Finally, a dental health resource for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers! Kit contains interactive lesson plans and experiments showing how cavities form and how to prevent them. Also included is a large mouth anatomy poster, "Heroes vs. Plaque" comic books, plaque disclosure tablets, books, etc. A kit is mailed to you for up to two weeks, and Delta Dental pays for all postage.

For more information, please contact us at:

**CommunityOutreach@deltadentalid.com**, or call **(208) 489-3550** (Boise) or **(866) 894-3563** (toll free).

You can also learn more about these resources by visiting **www.deltadentalid.com** and selecting "*Going Beyond Benefits.*"