



# Peach Review

ISSUE 26

JUNE 2019

## OFFICERS

- **President**  
Dustin Cain, CST,  
FAST
- **Vice President**  
T.C. Parker,  
CST, FAST
- **Secretary**  
Jennifer Behlmann,  
CST
- **Treasurer**  
Erin Baggett, CST

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Nicol Bates, CST
- Terri Crosson, CST,  
FAST
- Kelly Phillips, CST
- Susan Smith, CST
- Jamey Watson, CST

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**AST National  
Conference  
Delegate  
Reports**

**National  
Conference  
Highlights**

## The Business of 2019 AST National Conference

This year's national election was held for President, Vice President, Treasurer, and 3 Board of Directors.

Congratulations to the newly elected board members!



Holly Falcon  
CST, FAST

AST President



Kevin Craycraft  
CST, FAST

AST Vice  
President



Peggy Varnado  
CST, CSFA, FAST

AST Treasurer



David Alfaro  
CST

AST Director



Michelle Gay  
CST, FAST

AST Director

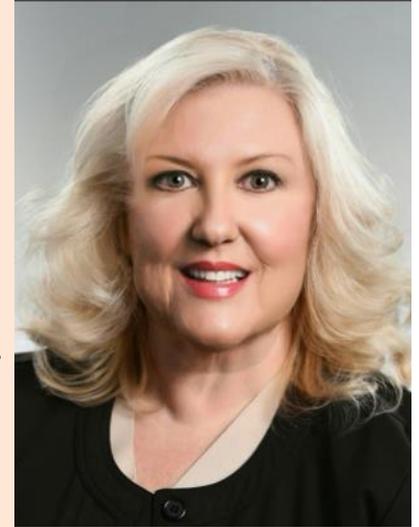


Tammy Pearson  
CST, CSFA, FAST

AST Director

## People Make the Difference

by TC Parker, CST, FAST, Vice President, GASA Delegate



Attending the 50th annual AST Conference was a wonderful blessing. Seeing old friends and meeting new ones is always the theme of every conference but this time it was more poignant because we were celebrating an organization half a century strong! Reminded of the strides AST has made was incredible. They displayed vintage pics everywhere. The 1969 beginnings were small, the mode of dress was humorous but the drive, and determination to grow the profession was as evident then as it is today! The commonality in those strides were the people. People are what make the difference.

My favorite part of the conference was the opening speaker, Dr. Adolph Brown. He is the epitome of Servant-Leader. His story was powerful, extraordinary and comical. You could not come away without being changed, especially in the old adage “judging a book by its cover”. Check him out on YouTube; it will be worth the effort.

The next favorite part for me was the delegate duties and meeting the candidates. Initially I was an alternate but we had two delegates that could not make it so that left me up to bat. It is a shame more of you do not want to experience representing Georgia in this honor. It is a wonderful experience having a voice and a vote. Please consider running next March to become a delegate. It is another example of people making a difference.

Finally, although it was not an AST event, the Scripps Spelling Bee was being held at the same hotel. After the opening evening party, Glenda McCloskey and I attended the final rounds of the Bee. It was so exciting and we ended up witnessing history. Never before, have so many children won the event. It was an eight-way tie! Seeing those young children losing gracefully and obtaining such a command of the English language was very inspiring. We could all have learned a lesson from them on grace under pressure and kindness to our fellow colleagues.

In ending, please remember, as you go through this sometimes-challenging life and profession that relationships matter and People make the difference!

# 2019 National Conference Highlights



## What a Great Week!

by Jamey Watson, CST, Board of Director, GASA Delegate



like that AST really worked to provide speakers that challenged those of us who were sitting in those seats as students.

Learning about the latest techniques in robotic surgery to the most up to date advances in plastics, neuro, and pediatric surgery.

If you weren't able to attend this year's conference, I challenge you to go visit the AST website and sign up to watch some of the courses that were taught at national conference. Not only do I think you will find them interesting but you can also earn your CEU's as well.

I am so grateful for the opportunity that was given to be to represent the Georgia State Assembly of the Association of Surgical Technologists as a Delegate and I hope that you will entrust me to represent Georgia again.

I encourage any of you who are interested in serving on the GASA Board of Directors or as a delegate at next year's conference to reach out to any one of us who currently serve on the GASA board. We all want to see others become active and fill the roles that one day will be vacant so that you too can learn the process and importance of an active state assembly and national board.

I can't wait to see you all in Tybee Island in September or if you aren't able to attend in September then definitely at next years conference in the great state of GEORGIA!

Wow! What an amazing time to be able to attend this years Association of Surgical Technologists National Conference. And not just any year, but AST's 50th anniversary. What better place to celebrate such a monumental year than in our nations capital?!

It's hard to believe that so much has been accomplished through our national organization in the short 50 years since it was first began. We have seen not only our profession grow in popularity as one of the fastest growing medical professions in the last 50 years, but we have also seen our profession become appreciated and respected as a vital member of the operating room surgical team. We have seen more surgical technology programs becoming accredited than every before.

And most importantly, in my opinion, are the constant drives of our individual state assemblies working extremely hard to lobby for legislation that would require surgical technologists in the operating room to be credentialed as a Certified Surgical Technologist.

When you begin to hear the stories of our colleagues and the grassroots work that they have done to achieve such legislation, it's hard to not feel empowered to work towards the same goal in our own state. Why? Because every patient deserves to have a Certified Surgical Technologist at their bedside for their surgical procedure.

This year's conference was of course a celebration of AST's golden anniversary. From day one it seemed like there was just an consistent feeling of pride and unity among all of the AST leadership and the attendees.

While I have been attending national conference since May 2000, I was thrilled that at this year's 50th anniversary conference I got my first opportunity to represent the great state of Georgia as a delegate. And trust me, being a delegate is not just a title that you carry while you walk around the conference halls and classrooms.

Being a delegate requires work and understanding of what it is that you think surgical technologists in your state and those around the country are wanting AST and the leadership to focus on. This requires sitting through business sessions to hear the discussions of AST business, and even more importantly, in my opinion, talking with those who were running for national leadership positions at this years conference.

I was proud to stand there with my fellow GASA delegates and speak with those who were seeking election. Trust me, we didn't just shake hands and say good luck. Our GASA delegates, every one of them, asked very straight to the point and sometimes tough questions. However, for me I could see the importance of doing just that. We need leaders who are seeking to only get a title or recognition. We need leaders who are going to work to help our state assemblies, work to help the individual surgical technologist, and work to make changes that will have a positive impact on the future of our profession.

After speaking and then finally going to cast our votes on Saturday morning, and later on hearing those results, I can tell you that I feel good about each and every leader that is representing us on the AST National Board. This year's conference classes that I sat through were excellent, and I felt

## Learning the Process

by Nicol Bates, CST, Board of Directors, GASA Delegate



I am glad that I had the opportunity to be a delegate for AST. I didn't know what to expect when I signed up, but AST makes sure you are involved in the process. Gene Burke, Delegate Chair, reached out to us immediately and let us know what was expected of us and what our responsibilities would be once we arrived at the conference. He was available to ask questions and make sure we knew where to be at all times. Also AST uses an app for the conference that gives you your schedule and sends reminders to the events that you signed up for.

When I signed up to be a delegate, I wanted to be a part of the process but didn't know what to expect and what all goes into the voting process. The first thing we heard from the candidates was their speeches. At that point I realized that deciding who would be on the board would be harder than I expected. I had to decide which of these people were most qualified to represent ALL of us. At first I felt a little unprepared and not qualified, but soon realized that I had been given tools to help me through the process. After hearing each speaker, there were things I liked and didn't like about each person. But I have to put that aside and decide based on who I thought would be best for the organization. That is not easy to know from a speech. Maybe they are not good speakers, or were just a little nervous. At that point I had to determine if what they want for AST is what is best for all of us.

Next we were able to attend a meet and greet with the candidates. If there was something I heard that I didn't like or understand. This was my opportunity to clarify. It was also my chance to see them not in front of an audience, maybe not so nervous, and get a better feel of who they really are before going off to vote. Each person running has a bio that all of the delegates and read and is their opportunity to show why they are qualified to run and their goals if elected. During the speeches I took notes so I could be prepared to ask them things that were not clear as well as things that were important to me. Many of them expressed what they had already done, but not so much what they were going to do, which is more important for me. This was helpful and made it a little easier to make a decision.

Finally, we take what we have learned and make a decision. In some cases, we already know a little about the candidates and can use that to base our decision on. Other times, all you have to go on is the speech and the Q&A session. This is when you feel a little nervous, because our members are counting on us and will be stuck with the decisions we make in the voting booth. It may not seem like much, but I take very seriously the fact that my vote represents not just myself but effects all the members of AST. At this point all I could do is what I thought would be best for everyone. It is a little daunting, but I am very proud to have been chosen as delegate to represent my state.

**AST National Conference in National Harbor, Maryland:  
Such a Great Place to Bee!**  
by **Glenda McCloskey, CST, Foundation Member,  
GASA Delegate**



Attending the AST national conference in National Harbor this year was an exciting and wonderful experience! In keeping with tradition, AST held their annual conference in a well-selected city, hotel and area where there is much to offer in the way of sight-seeing, nearby activities and delicious food. I have been to national conferences before but this was my first time in Maryland and my first time serving as a delegate for our Georgia State Assembly.

At the conference it was my duty to learn about (and later vote for) the candidates who were running for executive positions on the national level of AST. I attended a Candidate's Forum where those running for VP, Secretary, Treasurer and Board of Directors sat at individual tables; it was our job to walk around and speak with the candidates and learn how they thought they would bring about progress to the issues that were important to them, and to us.

The candidates take their roles and their potential new offices very seriously! We spent the majority of our time speaking with new candidates we were not familiar with, or who had

never run for an office before. We later heard one experienced candidate became concerned that since the state of Georgia delegates spent more time with new candidates, it indicated votes from the state of Georgia would not come their way!

It was an honor to weigh out pros and cons of the candidates and to cast votes on behalf of the state of Georgia. In the end, I believe we elected some great new and incumbent leadership to the national board of AST.

It also was great fun to be surrounded by and to "learn the ropes" with some of the wonderful leadership from the state of Georgia: Dustin and Jennifer Cain, Jamey Watson, TC Parker, Gene Burke and Nicol Bates.

We also got to know other Georgia CSTs we'd never met before at a meet & greet we held for people to come and learn more about being involved in our Georgia State Assembly family. How great to meet Shena Morris, Azura Showe, Stephanie Hawley, Elaine Fudge, and Dwjuan Anders for the first time!

We had a lot of fun talking about the progression of our State Assembly and how we can help each other in future endeavors. I look forward to seeing them again at the next GASA meeting in September! We also discussed the national conference being in Atlanta next year, and how we need ALL our Georgia members to work together to make sure it's a huge success when the nation comes to our house next year!

The final thing I MUST tell you about national conference is what happened in my free time. The 2019 Scripps National Spelling Bee competition was held and filmed live on ESPN at our hotel and I got to sit in on the live broadcasting. Now while this may not sound exciting to you, I assure you it was a thrill and I wish you had been sitting right beside me!

Fortunately, since you were not there, TC Parker, my friend and co-worker, and your GASA Vice President, was there and she loved it too! We watched as history was made when for the first time ever, eight contestants were declared winners because these kids could not be beaten!

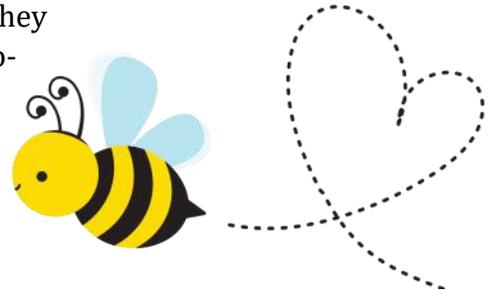
Scripps was beginning to run out of spelling words and stated to the audience they were in “uncharted territory” and any contestant that correctly spelled their word in the final round would be declared a winner. We watched history unfold as one by one, each of the eight

kids successfully spelled their words...auftaktigkeit... taurokathapsia...moazagotl, etc.

As the final competitor correctly spelled his word, we all tearfully (and wildly) celebrated as confetti fell on the eight elated contestants! The next morning on Good Morning America they were asked if they wish they could have been the single winner. They all emphatically shook their heads, and expressed they were happy to be winners together and would not have wanted it any other way.

I was inspired at their support for one another and how happy they were to win as a team...and then it sort of made me think of the team of the Operating Room and the team of my fellow CSTs from Georgia.

Even when it feels like the challenges are monumental, I’m glad we also are a team that can succeed together...and who knows, maybe even make history.



## A Conference of Firsts

by Jennifer Cain, CST, GASA Delegate

This was my first year going to conference after becoming a CST. It was amazing to say the least. Washington D.C. is one of the coolest cities I have ever been to and I cannot wait to go back. With that being said, being able to attend the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AST and it being in the nation’s capitol was unreal!

From the first day to the last, I learned so much and met so many people. I have built relationships with people from all over the country that will last a lifetime. If you are able, I would definitely recommend attending national conference.

A second first for me was being elected as a delegate. I didn’t really know what to expect but it was definitely an experience that I hope others will want to have. Being able to have a say in which leaders get elected to our national board is fantastic. The democratic process in which this happens is very professional and not taken lightly. With that being said, I can say that I had a hand in helping our profession progress by just my one vote.

I hope that other members of the GASA will want to become delegates so that they can help make a difference as well! You also create close relationships with the other delegates because you spend a good amount of time together. I can certainly say that I will definitely be attending year after year.

