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EDITOR'S NOTE KIMBERLEY KEARSEY

Impressions in practice

I ALWAYS ENJOY DOING THE SUMMER issue of *Registered Nurse Journal* because I get to work directly with members to edit their stories for our summer collection (pg. 16). This year, the communications department received some great submissions about the real world of nursing, and the surprises that novice RNs did not see coming when they finished their exams and began their careers.

I think it's safe to say there are always surprises in the real world – no matter what your chosen profession might be. We live in a protected bubble when we're students, learning about things that are predictable, neatly packaged, and probable. If we experience anything "unexpected" in the classroom, it's likely a pop quiz or a surprise question on the exam that seems to come out of nowhere.

"Unexpected" in real-world nursing affects patients and families, and can sometimes mean the difference between life and death. As you will see in this issue, so much of nursing is about these surprise experiences, and the resulting

revelation that each curve ball in your career is meant to strengthen your resolve that this is the right profession for you.

Laura Wagner (pg. 13) was herself a student when she had her first experience with restraints as a nursing assistant in a long-term care home. She admits she was too inexperienced to know the impact of their use on her patient's safety and quality of life. The experience was a turning point that led her to research restraint use, and to focus some of her career on creating better safety measures in nursing homes.

This issue of the *Journal* is filled with stories that can be described as either a turning point or a surprise. I'm not certain there's actually a difference. Whatever the descriptor, these have clearly left a lasting impression on the nurses who have lived the experience. And the communications team hopes they leave a lasting impression on you. **RN**