

The “Personal” Side of the Visit to Capitol Hill

by Lisa Stifel, QPA, and Deborah Turner

ON OCTOBER 30, 2001, THE VISIT TO CAPITOL HILL WAS AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE FOR THESE TWO 2001 ASPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE ATTENDEES. OUR MEETING WITH REP. DONALD MANZULLO (R-IL) RESULTED IN AN EXCITING AFTERNOON VISIT TO THE CAPITOL BUILDING, WHICH CULMINATED WITH THE MEETING OF ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL AND RESPECTED WOMEN IN AMERICAN POLITICS.

This year, ASPA had encouraged Conference attendees to sign up for meetings with their elected officials to thank them for passing EGTRRA and to “offer ourselves and ASPA as technical experts on pension issues, and build a relationship with our Congressman.” Sarah Simoneaux, CPC, a member of the ASPA Board of Directors, spoke to the attendees at Monday evening’s “Rally for the Visit to the Hill.” Sarah and Brian Graff, Esq., ASPA’s Executive Director, explained that our visits could run the gamut from a brief conversation with a staff member to an hour-long meeting with our Senator or Congressman. Our particular meeting turned into an “excellent political adventure!”

Our afternoon began with the shuttle bus dropping our group off in front of the Supreme Court. We then crossed the northeast lawn of the Capitol, where a press conference was in progress. Along with other ASPA Visit to Capitol Hill participants, we began our afternoon viewing the US government in action. Gathered in front of national television cameras for the press conference were Captain Duane Woerth, president of the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) and Republican Senators Olympia Snowe (R-ME), John McCain (R-AZ), John Warner (R-VA), Kay Bailey-Hutchison (R-TX), Democratic Senator John Rockefeller (D-WV), and several others. The purpose of the press conference was to lobby for the passage of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, which was subsequently signed into law by President Bush on November 19, 2001.

Our meeting was scheduled by ASPA with Rep. Manzullo (R-IL) for 1:00 p.m. in his quarters at the Cannon House Office Building on Independence Avenue. As we made our way down the corridor we took notice of some of Rep. Manzullo’s well-known neighbors who also had offices on the second floor – Reps. Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and Mary Bono (R-CA). Before Rep. Manzullo escorted us to his office, he introduced us to Rep. Lee Terry (R-NE) who was sharing office space since his offices in the Longworth House Building were closed due to the anthrax contamination. We thanked Rep. Manzullo, Chairman

of the House Committee on Small Businesses, for his support of EGTRRA and the Small Business Job Protection Act. We explained how the increased limitations, catch-up contributions, and saver’s credit under EGTRRA would benefit both employees and employers of small businesses in Northern Illinois. Rep. Manzullo engaged us in an amiable conversation about our positions at RSM McGladrey, Inc., where we serve many small and medium sized businesses.

Being cognizant of his schedule, we were about to depart when he offered to take us on a personal tour of the Capitol building, which had been closed to visitors since September 11. We gladly accepted his invitation. We accessed the Capitol through one of the many tunnels that connect the House and Senate office buildings. While viewing high school student artwork displayed in the hallway, we met Rep. Dennis Rehberg (R-MT), who stopped to speak with Rep. Manzullo about the snowmobile ban in Yellowstone National Park. (A proposed ban is in place to eliminate snowmobiles from Yellowstone by 2004 due to the high pollution emission levels of the machines. However, the ban would cut approximately \$16.5 million from the local economy and eliminate 400 jobs.) Reps. Manzullo and Rehberg talked about meeting in West Yellowstone, MT, to discuss this polarizing issue.

Upon entering the Capitol, Rep. Manzullo gave us an historical tour of Statuary Hall, which was the meeting place of the US House of Representatives until 1857. In the corridor between Statuary Hall and the Rotunda, we passed close by Senator McCain. We proceeded to the Senate Chamber visitor’s gallery where we briefly listened to Sen. Larry Craig (R-ID) passionately introduce legislation on fairness in mental health care coverage under Medicare. We noticed Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) in chamber while Sen. Jesse Helm (R-NC) watched from the gallery. As we made our way through the halls of Congress, we passed Sen.



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Good friends, George Taylor, MSPA, 2001 ASPA President, and Sarah Simoneaux, CPC, Chair of the Congressional Outreach Committee, celebrate a successful Visit to Capitol Hill.

One of the groups of ASPA’s 2001 Visit to Capitol Hill participants pause before our nation’s Capitol.

The American spirit was proudly displayed at the Grand Hyatt during the 2001 Annual Conference.

Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD) surrounded by reporters and staffers. Upon exiting the House of Representatives visitor's gallery, Rep. Manzullo announced "let me show you the best view in Washington." On this beautiful, sunny, fall afternoon we stepped out onto the balcony outside Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert's (R-IL) office and looked down upon the same grand view that presidents have viewed on inauguration day. Wow! As we paused to take in the glorious view of Washington, DC, past the Capitol Reflecting Pool, across the National Mall to the Washington Monument and beyond, we contemplated whether the place we stood, this cherished symbol of our democracy, was supposed to be another target on September 11.

We are thankful that ASPA heeded President Bush's call to America to conduct business as usual and did not cancel the 2001 ASPA Annual Conference or the Visit to Capitol Hill. Though the last two hours with Rep. Manzullo included a roster of political who's who, the day's finale was meeting a woman that we both hold in high esteem. On our departure from the building through a first floor corridor, we recognized a powerful, intelligent woman who is as well-known for her expertise in foreign policy as she is for her exquisite taste in brooches. We were awestruck when we noticed former Secretary of State, Dr. Madeleine

Albright, approaching us. Deb quickly gained the attention of the fast-moving Dr. Albright and introduced herself. This gave Lisa time to gain some composure, introduce herself as well and take notice of the spider brooch pinned to her jacket. Dr. Albright had said in a recent television interview that dignitaries would be wary of her when she wore the spider pin. With her warm smile, firm handshake, and pleasant demeanor, we can say that the pin was only chosen that day because it was almost Halloween. Our meeting Dr. Albright was the highlight of our trip to Washington, DC. Because we made a decision to adhere to President Bush's advice, as did ASPA, we had a most rewarding and unforgettable day. For us, October 30, 2001, will be a day to remember! ▲

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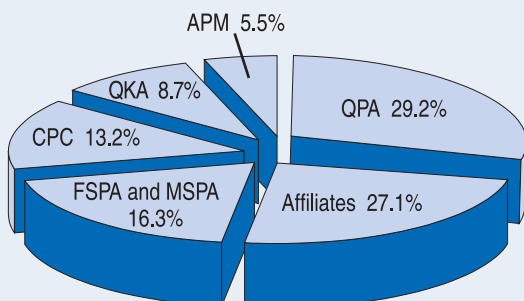
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JANUARY 2002 ASPA MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

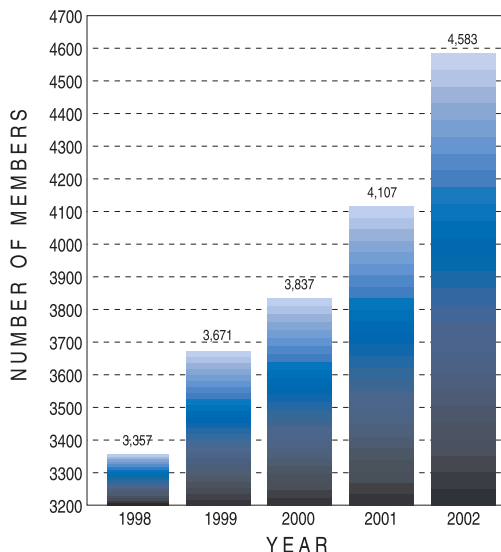
Highest Designation Held

FSPA	56
MSPA	693
CPC	603
QPA	1,338
QKA	401
APM	250
Designation Totals	3,341
Affiliates	1,242
Grand Total	4,583

Membership Composition



ASPA MEMBERSHIP HISTORY 1998-2002



Membership Count Comparison

Year	Count	Net Increase	Annual Increase
January 2002	4,583	+476	11.6%
January 2001	4,107	+270	7.0%
January 2000	3,837	+166	4.5%
January 1999	3,671	+314	9.0%