

MONITOR

Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists

www.virginiacrnas.com

December 2005

"Nurse Anesthetists: Providing quality Anesthesia to Virginians for over 100 years."

Attention: VANA CRNAS / SRNAS Plan to attend the midyear assembly and lobby Capitol Hill.

Have you ever sat down and pondered your career as a nurse anesthetist? Have you ever wondered what it has taken to keep our organization as strong and viable as it has been for the last 75 years? Sure there have been many bumps in the road and we still have a long way to go to have the perfect profession, but you have to admit we have a great career. In the past CRNAs, just like yourself, have stepped up and volunteered time and energy to make this happen.

My first day of anesthesia school seems just like yesterday. My director Anne Newton stood up and welcomed my classmates and myself to the great world of Nurse Anesthesia. Then she went on to say that, if we thought we had come just to learn, graduate, then go about our career never participating in the function of the VANA or the AANA we were wrong. She informed us starry eyed student that it is the duty and responsibility of each of us to become involved and stay involved. Her words still ring in my ears and I have to say, that she grounded me to the fact that our organization remains strong because of our involvement.

Mid year assembly is a very intense fact finding adventure that culminates with CRNAs from all over the country lobbying Capitol Hill. If this sounds overwhelming and not for you; let me tell you a little secret. It's not. This is one of the most empowering and rewarding experiences that you can have as a CRNA. The AANA team in Washington works all year to promote our profession and let Congress know where we stand on our issues. But it is up to us – the CRNAS to educate our legislators as to what we do and what we are. Remember our legislators work for us. They want to know our concerns.

If this has sparked any interest please consider attending the mid year assembly. The meetings educate you on our issues, trains you to lobby, and provide you with everything you need to go to the hill. If you can't make the meeting you can still participate. The VANA will be going to Capitol Hill on Tuesday afternoon April 25th and all day on Wednesday April 26th.

You will not be alone; you will be partnered up with other CRNAs that feel comfortable with lobbying. Each year students join us on the hill and by the 3rd office visit they are pros. I know April is a long way off, but as CRNAS we need to plan ahead to get time off from our work place. Please plan on helping with this endeavor, after all we are in Virginia, and are within driving distance to Washington D.C. I challenge each and every CRNA and SRNA to try and participate this April. I promise you will not be disappointed. You will come home feeling empowered and energized. Feel free to contact Patti Bright or the VANA office by e-mail or phone. I look forward to having the largest lobby delegation on the hill this April.

VANA Nurse Anesthetist Lobby Day

By Patti Bright CRNA FPD

One of the highlights of Nurse Anesthetist week is always our visit to the State leaders. This is a fun filled and important event each January. Sunday, January 22nd kicks off National Nurse Anesthetist Week. Virginia is off and running with two editorials being published, one in the Richmond Times and, new this year, the other in the Virginia Pilot. I am hoping that each CRNA in Virginia is planning a special event this week in your work place.

On Wednesday, January 25th, the VANA CRNAS are heading to Richmond. This is a few hours of PR, letting the General Assembly members know who we are and what we do. It is traditional that we distribute personally to each of the legislative offices: a bagel box, an editorial, and the nurse anesthetist week pin.

This event is always a big success. I do need your help. Please consider blocking off January 25th to help your State. It is a fun and very easy commitment. We gather in the lobby of the General Assembly office building at 9:00 a.m. and split into groups. You will not be alone; you will be with fellow CRNAS and SRNAS. Please plan to attend.

If I have sparked just a bit of interest, please contact me personally. I can be reached via e-mail at crnaruns@aol.com or feel free to call me at 757-319-2104. See you January 25th.

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**ADVERTISING IN THE
MONITOR**

*Ready to Sell Products? Services?
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The *MONITOR* is the official newsletter of the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists (VANA) mailed to over 800 VANA members residing in Virginia. Quarterly issues of the *MONITOR* are planned for the next VANA fiscal year.

GET THE SURE SELL:
Advertising in the *MONITOR* will cost only: Full page \$200, Half page \$100, 1/4 page \$50, 1/8 page \$25.

Classified ads in the *MONITOR* will cost only \$1.00 per line (approximately 36 spaces) with a minimum charge of \$5.00.

GOLD PLAN: Full page ad in the next 4 issues \$700 (12% discount!) paid in advance -- guaranteed!

DEADLINES: Please send advance payments with your camera-ready artwork/classified to the VANA office:

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The deadline for the
next issue is:

Feb. 1, 2006

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Rendezvous in Vegas

Your CRNA colleagues from the Michigan Association of Nurse Anesthetists cordially invite you to...

2006 MANA Spring Meeting

Thursday, May 4 - Sunday, May 7, 2006 - Las Vegas Hilton

Full conference details - plus secure on-line registration available on
www.miana.org

**VANA 2006
Fall Conference
October 20-22, 2006**

Wintergreen Resort
COMING UP FOR SOME AIR

District 5 of the
Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists
invites you to our
2006 Winter Workshop
March 11, 2006

7:15a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn Select Richmond - Koger Center South
10800 Midlothian Turnpike, Richmond, VA

\$100 Members
\$130 non-members

Call or email the VANA office for more info:
804-754-4122 or vanacrna@comcast.net



What's New On the Web

www.virginiacrnas.com

Visit our website,
where you will find
the following information:

- ▶ Latest News
- ▶ Calendar of Events
- ▶ Contacts for Board of Directors
- ▶ Legislative Information and Contacts
- ▶ Important Links
- ▶ VANA CE Sponsored Events
- ▶ Members Only Section
- ▶ And more!



President's Message

by Cathy Harrison

The last couple of months have been busy for me and the VANA. The Fall Meeting that was held in Williamsburg, VA September 16-18, 2005 was well attended by both Virginia and North Carolina members. We also had CRNAs from Maine, Tennessee and Maryland. The critiques were very favorable especially concerning the resort format and quality of the clinical speakers. During the business meeting, the new board of directors was introduced including our student representative, Gina Corbett and nominations for the national election were made; Louise Hershkowitz for President, Tim Murry for Region 2, Patti Bright for Resolutions and Ted Schweikert for Nominating Committee. The ballots will be mailed out sooner than you think, so please remember these folks and "check the box".

We began October with the Leadership Weekend in Richmond. It was a very busy weekend with great ideas presented for our strategic planning for the year. The contract was signed for the lawyer, Meade Spotts and a financial planner was selected for the investing of some of our assets.

I just got back from the Fall Assembly of States in Chicago. Six Virginia CRNAs including Gina, represented the state. This was a wonderful opportunity to introduce her to the political and business sides of anesthesia. The lectures on Leadership were fantastic with a strong emphasis on mentoring. We have a duty as experienced CRNAs to mentor the students and new graduates; they are our future.

It isn't too late to begin planning for National Nurse Anesthetist Week, which is January 22-28, 2006. The AANA bookstore has a packet that can be mailed to you that has posters, media responses, etc.. The advertorial will not only be in the Richmond Times Dispatch, but due to the efforts of Karin Lundgren, will also be in the Virginia Pilot. Don't forget to mark your calendars for January 25, which is Lobby Day in Richmond. We can use all of the help that we can get to deliver bagels and copies of the advertorial to our state representatives.

Have a safe and Happy Holiday.

VANA CRNAS ROCK!

by Patti Bright

What does rock and roll and homeless hungry people have to do with the VANA? Let me just fill you in. We as nurse anesthetists are very lucky people. Sure we work hard, are well educated and do shoulder lots of responsibility, but lets face it we have a great career.

The VANA feels that as a group we need to reach out into the community to show our humanity. And this is where rock and roll comes into the picture. We are gathering interested CRNAS and SRNAS who would like to challenge themselves physically and mentally to help raise money to feed the hungry. We are talking the Rock and Roll Half Marathon in Virginia Beach next Labor Day weekend. By committing to train to walk or run these 13.1 miles we will be helping to feed the Virginia Beach homeless.

We are partnering with P.I.N. (people in need) a group who feeds 50 or more people each and every Sunday evening.

Are you interested? You can be on the ground floor in helping to plan this event. We are at the drawing board now trying to make this a very fun and worthwhile event.

As far as the planning has gotten thus far is that all the walkers and runners will be wearing the same shirt (coolmax of course) with a catchy slogan advertising that "CRNAS ROCK" on the front, and on the back the statement that "CRNAS are RUNNING to FEED HUNGRY PEOPLE." Think of the possibilities. This will be a great opportunity for PR and also to show everyone that CRNAS do care about their fellow man.

Not interested or able to walk or run? You still can be part of our team. We are planning to man a water stop along the way and we can also help man the medical tents.

If you can't be there physically, you can send a monetary tax deductible donation.

There are nearly 800 CRNAS in Virginia, just think of it, if only 25% of us come out for this event what an impact we will make on our community.

If you want more information please contact Patti Bright at crnaruns@aol.com.

Come on CRNAS, step up- rock out. We are a group on the move. See you at the beach on September 3rd.

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225, 230, 231, 232, 238

You live in District 5
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District Reports

District I Report

by Linda Ferro, CRNA District Director

We are in the planning phase for a meeting to be held in January, 2006. Topic, Date, and Place to be announced. We will keep you posted.

District II Report

by Michelle Yelverton, CRNA District Director

District 2 is winding down 2005 with a Holiday Wine & Cheese Gathering on Dec. 4th. The event, sponsored by Aspect Medical Systems, Inc., is being held at Belmont Country Club in Ashburn, VA. Our guest speaker is Dean Mazurek, CRNA of Mazurek Anesthesia Services, LLC.

We're gearing up for an exciting new year. Jan. 22-28 is National Nurse Anesthetists Week. Let me know how your anesthesia group celebrates this year! Lobby Day in Richmond is January 25. I hope to have many representatives from our district joining us. Stay tuned...more events & more CEUs are headed your way in 2006.

District 2 member, Louise Hershkowitz, CRNA, MSHA has announced her candidacy for AANA President-elect in 2006. Louise's position statement can be viewed on the VANA website: www.virginiacrnas.com. We are extremely pleased to support her for this position.

Finally, happy holidays to my District 2 family. I am looking forward to a very happy new year in District 2. As always, feel free to contact me at vanadistrict2@yahoo.com

District III and IV Report

by Bonnie Bowman, CRNA District Director

What can I say? There was a less than expected turnout of Virginia CRNA's at the State meeting in Williamsburg. Both planning teams worked hard to make this a meeting that would appeal to the greatest number of our professional colleagues. Most of those attending were from the Eastern areas and only a few made the long drive to the coast. It is a long way, especially if the family is coming along.

In way of apology, many members never received flyers in a timely enough manner to allow for time off or to register early. The August Monitor had a big blooper: the registration form on page 7 was not there. Of the people I spoke to in my district, four said they did not receive the main flyer mailed out from NC. Others do not use the website as a main source of information even though it is updated regularly. The speakers were all good. The lunch hours on Friday and Saturday were filled by two motivational speakers that had messages they applied to more than just our work space. The FISH lecture on Sunday was for life and how to present yourself in the business world that actually lets people know that you are there and listening to them.

We learned much from this meeting. Folks want the resort format but less "motivation;" as many CEU's as possible in the format and inexpensive meals; also dates when the children are not in school. One of the members I spoke with wanted a meeting that did not conflict with any hunting or fishing season. I know that there are more like him out there- Western VA is a great place to live and enjoy the seasons and the outdoors.

I missed the October workshop in Richmond but as soon as I have news from that I will put it on the website and definitely in the next Monitor. The weekend was to plan the next year and set goals for the new board. I do know that there is going to be another meeting in our district in April. I am aiming for 4 or 5 CEU's and I hope that I can convince more of you to attend. It will be a Saturday, half day, with lunch.

District V Report

by Renee Greenfield, CRNA District Director

The District 5 October meeting was well attended and Mr. George Greenfield PA-C gave a presentation on Valvular heart Disease.

Our District 5 Winter Workshop Meeting will be on March 11th at the Koger Center in Midlothian, at the Holiday Inn. It will be a day filled with great speakers and offering CEU's for all who attend! Please Look for the flyers coming in the mail after the holidays and we look forward to seeing you there.

In April, we will have another dinner meeting with a speaker and offering a CEU. More detail on this meeting at a later date!

District 5 wishes everyone safe and Happy Holidays!

RUFF'S WAR

A Navy Nurse on the Frontline in Iraq

**By Cmdr. Cheryl L. Ruff, Nurse Corps, USN (Ret.)
and Cmdr. K. Sue Roper, Nurse Corps, USN (Ret.)**

Twenty-five years in the Navy had made Cheryl Ruff an independent, resilient, strong woman – and a master at providing patient care while serving at various Navy hospitals around the world. But nothing prepared her mind, body, soul, and spirit for what she experienced on the frontlines of the Iraq war as a member of the Bravo Surgical Company. Known as the “devil does,” they followed directly behind the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force as they entered Iraq at the onset of Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003.

Right along with the Marines, Commander Ruff, the only female nurse anesthetist at the front, and the rest of her surgical team learned to endure the brutal conditions of the desert while regularly confronting questions of life and death. Working in temperatures well over 100 degrees in full MOP gear, Ruff and her team set up mobile hospital tents in the sand wherever needed. As Black Hawk helicopters brought in steady streams of the wounded, they found it impossible to maintain standard sterilization procedures, and clean up often amounted to just shoveling the blood-soaked sand out of the tent. During surgery they often wore lighted helmets so they could continue operating if the generator failed and donned gas masks when warnings were issued. These horrific conditions, coupled with the gruesome images of shredded bodies and the cries of wounded children, became Ruff's world.



Cmdr. Cheryl L. Ruff, a certified nurse anesthetist, retired from the U.S. Navy in 2003 following her final tour of duty in Iraq. She is the author of several articles published in nursing journals. **Cmdr. K. Sue Roper**, who spent twenty-one years as a Navy Nurse, is the Editor-in-Chief of the NNCA News, the official news magazine of the Navy Nurse Corps Association.



Louise Hershkowitz, CRNA, MSHA *Candidate for AANA President-Elect FY'07*

AANA: AANA Board of Directors: Region 2 Director 2000-02, Treasurer 2003. AANA Association Management Services Board 2003. AANA Foundation Board of Trustees 2005. Committees: Resolutions, Nominating, State Government Relations (Chair), Practice, Finance, State Organizational Development, Continuing Education (Chair), Council on Recertification, Ad Hoc Committee on Leadership Development (Chair). Testified before U. S. Congress in support of Military Incentive Specialty Pay for CRNAs and Graduate Education Funding for Nurse Anesthesia Education.

Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists: Government Relations and other committees; holder of many offices including President 1992, 1993, 1997.

Education: AAS (Nursing) Northern Virginia Community College 1977; BS (Nurse Anesthesia) George Washington University 1981; MSHA (Healthcare Administration) Virginia Commonwealth University 1996.

Professional Practice: Nurse Anesthetist at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital, Fairfax, Virginia and Clinical Coordinator for Student Nurse Anesthetists.

Dear Colleague,

Today's challenges to our profession require that AANA's leaders understand the realities of the broad issues affecting CRNA practice. They must communicate effectively with members, other health care professionals and the general public about those issues to promote and protect our profession and our patients. As a candidate for President-elect, I hope to discuss a broad variety of these issues over the course of the next eight months with as many members as possible. To begin the discussion, I would like to share my views on some issues that I believe are important for all CRNAs today:

1. AANA is strongest when its membership and its leadership work together.

Over the past couple of years, many members have expressed both frustration and dismay over actions or perceived failures to act by the AANA. Many feel that their attempts to communicate their views and concerns to the leadership have been ignored. I believe that many of these situations would not have occurred if there were more open communication by AANA's leaders and more transparent processes by which decisions are made. As AANA President, I would assure that, utilizing all traditional and innovative means available, AANA will establish effective two-way communication with members, conduct less board discussions in executive session and institute more open decision-making processes.

2. AANA is most effective when it is pro-active in promoting and protecting our profession.

CRNA practice continues to be assaulted on local, state and national levels. Underlying many of these assaults have been misrepresentations about our daily practice of providing the safest and highest quality of anesthesia care. These accusations have been most effective where there is a lack of public understanding about our education and safety and what we do every day. We must invest in an aggressive and positive public relations campaign that will educate patients, the public, industry leaders and policy-makers about the reality and value of CRNA practice. And, while it has been essential to engage in the difficult mediated discussions with the ASA, we must continually assess the relative value of continuing that dialogue.

3. AANA must keep our educational programs strong.

Although the number of CRNA graduates has doubled in less than 10 years, demographic and workforce studies indicate that continued growth will be threatened by a lack of faculty in the near future. To prevent this development, AANA must continue to work for increased availability of funding and incentives for basic nurse anesthesia and faculty/doctoral education to assure that the necessary faculty and clinical resources will be available to continue this growth.

4. AANA and the state associations must encourage and support members to become leaders.

Over the years, I have met many capable CRNAs who have been hesitant to take on leadership responsibilities because they have no management or leadership training or experience. Thus, we have not taken advantage of their enthusiasm and wisdom, and a relatively small cadre of CRNAs has shouldered the burden of protecting and promoting CRNA practice. AANA and the state associations have recognized the need to recruit, mentor and educate future leaders. We begin the Leadership Development Program this year and, as its Chair, I personally invite you to develop new skills and become part of a new generation of leaders.

I want to hear from you and would welcome your support in my campaign to change AANA for the better. Please contact me at home at 703-476-0671 or by e-mail at louisehershkowitz@yahoo.com.

MONITOR

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