

MONITOR



Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists

www.virginiacrnas.com

May 2006

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

Mid-year Assembly: Student's Perspective

by Felice Tan, SRNA, Virginia Commonwealth University

As nurse anesthesia students, we spend the majority of our time in the operating room. It's a bit of a twist when we shed the scrubs, don the business-wear and head to Capitol Hill. The AANA mid-year assembly in Washington, D.C. was an experience that brought new light to the "professional aspects of nurse anesthesia."



(VANA Students with Cathy Harrison, CRNA,
VANA President)

I met seasoned CRNAs, familiar with lobbying in D.C., and those new to the political arena. The speakers at the assembly and those in attendance seemed passionate about supporting nurse anesthesia and educating others about what we do. Looking around the large meeting room, I realized that there were CRNAs and students present, representing almost every U.S. state, who took time out of their busy schedules to come to D.C. and promote the nurse anesthesia profession in order to secure our future practice as well as the welfare of our patients. It was also encouraging to learn that there was a record number in attendance at this meeting. We went out to lobby at Capitol Hill on Tuesday and Wednesday, and everywhere we turned, we saw groups of CRNAs and SRNAs making their rounds to visit their congressmen and senators; you couldn't walk around the legislative buildings without passing one of us.

I feel that as students, we should get to know this side of the profession, and continue to be involved as we become CRNAs. Who else is going to endorse our profession and who better to do the job than us? You might be thinking, "I don't know anything about politics, and I wouldn't know what to say." What better way to learn than through the VANA and meetings such as this? We started the assembly with a tutorial on current issues on which the AANA was focusing. They guided us through what we needed to know and be able to discuss, using methods such as role playing and demonstration of different scenarios. By the time we arrived at the legislative offices, we felt pretty confident in discussing the issues.

This was definitely an experience that helped me to understand the different aspects of the nurse anesthesia profession. I am grateful that the VANA gave me the opportunity to attend this meeting and encourage other students to get involved with their associations, locally and/or nationally.

A Trip to the Hill

by Patti Bright

Midyear Assembly in D.C. was a powerful meeting and VANA was there. Virginia nurse anesthetists and student nurse anesthetists were visible throughout this meeting. If you have never attended a midyear assembly you are missing out. The AANA provides a program that informs and prepares a CRNA to comfortably lobby Capital Hill. This year was exceptional. VANA members knew the issues and had the skills to meet with the legislators and health aides.

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2005 - 2006 VANA Board of Directors

ADVERTISING IN THE MONITOR

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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.

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Publication of materials in this newsletter does not imply endorsement by the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists

On Tuesday afternoon and all day on Wednesday (April 25th and 26th) Virginia CRNAS and SRNAS met personally in each of our 11 representatives and 2 senators offices. It was a very successful and rewarding experience.

I would like to personally thank each and every CRNA and SRNA who volunteered their time and energy to make this happen.



(above left to right)

James Fountain, SRNA (Navy Portsmouth)

Patti Bright, CRNA

John Thompson, SRNA (Navy Portsmouth)

Karin Lundgren, CRNA, VANA Past President

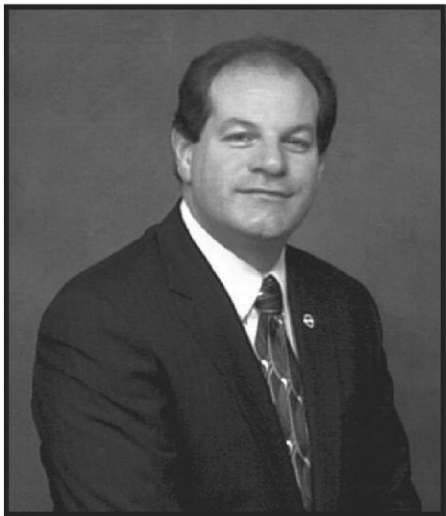
Congresswoman Thelma Drake

Jill Poston, SRNA, ODU

Anissa Gerber, SRNA, ODU



Florida Association of Nurse Anesthetists presents



BRUCE WEINER, CRNA, MS CANDIDATE, REGION 7 DIRECTOR

**Past President and Board of Director, FANA
Federal Political Director • AANA Government Affairs**

- A proven leader at the state and national level
- Defeated regulation opposing CRNA practice in offices
- Developed state sponsored student organization
- Increased mentoring and involvement of state membership
- Dedicated to protecting and preserving CRNA practice rights
- Committed to the future of our profession, clinical practice and education

Let your voice be heard.

VOTE for the candidate of your choice in this year's AANA elections.

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



This has been a very busy quarter for VANA. We began the year with Nurse Anesthetists Week, January 22-28 2006. An advertorial was featured in the Richmond Times Dispatch, district 5 sponsored advertisement on NPR, events took place in various hospitals which included special recognition of CRNAs by physicians, other nurses and pharmaceutical representatives, an article in the Farmville, VA newspaper and a special notice at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth. Lobby Day took place on January 25, 2006 and was very successful. We have visited with the Representatives at the state capitol for several years and they look forward to our return each year. Keep up the good work of promoting our profession throughout the year.

On a sad note, Paula Cronin, who was one of the first nurse anesthetists in Virginia to have an office based practice, passed away this year and our lobbyist, Leslie Herdegren has been diagnosed with lung cancer. Please contact Robin Morrison to get her address and feel free to send cards.

The Mid-Year Assembly of States was held in Washington, DC April 23-26, 2006. We were so pleased to have the support of our student nurse anesthetists, who attended the lectures with us and were great representatives of our organization on Capitol Hill. Thanks to Patti Bright, we had meetings with our Senators and Congressmen on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday. We also had a student representative, Chris Waddell, who attended a fund raising luncheon for Congressman Eric Cantor on Wednesday. Our visits were very productive and our presentations of issues were well received. I would like to thank all of the CRNAs and students that participated; your presence and professionalism made this event a success.

VANA has decided to take on the exciting task of getting involved with the Rock-n-Roll half marathon, which will be held in Virginia Beach, VA this September 3rd. Our runners will be soliciting donations for People in Need, an organization that cares for the homeless in Virginia Beach. In addition to runners, we need volunteers to man the first aid station, water station and a hospitality room. A pasta dinner the night before the race will enable CRNAs to meet with local representatives, members of PIN and some of the people that they are running for. Mark your calendars and start getting ready for this huge event. In case you like rock-n-roll music, there is a band every mile along the race route and a head liner at the end of the race. Check the information in this issue of the Monitor about the race and who to contact in order to get involved.

This is the 75th Anniversary of the AANA. I hope to see many of you in Cleveland. This is going to be a fabulous annual meeting with former President Bill Clinton as the keynote speaker at the opening ceremonies and many other events planned!

Start planning for the Fall Meeting, which will be held in Wintergreen this year. We have been able to get the weekend of October 20-22 at the resort. This should be a beautiful time of the year to spend a weekend in the Blue Ridge Mountains. For those of you who are bringing your families, there are plenty of things to do to keep them busy during the meeting; the spa has recently been upgraded.

As always, I leave you with "this is your profession" get involved and stay involved. AANA elections will begin soon and you will be getting your ballot for state elections early May. It has been determined that twenty-five percent of all AANA members vote and even less state members take advantage of that privilege. We are so fortunate to have Louise Herszowitz, CRNA running for AANA president-elect this year. Louise has been so instrumental in getting our state organization to the place where we are today. She has been president of the VANA and held other offices in our organization throughout the many years that she has been involved. Just think of where we might be next year if Louise is elected to a national position in the AANA.

Have a wonderful spring and summer.

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234, 235, 236, 237

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You live in District II

Director: Gloria Black, CRNA
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If your zip code begins with: 228,
229, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244,
245, 246

You live in District 3 & 4

Director: Bonnie Bowman, CRNA
themorrigan@earthlink.net

If your zip code begins with: 224,
225, 230, 231, 232, 238

You live in District 5

Director: Renee Greenfield, CRNA
sidned@comcast.net



District Reports

District I Report

by Linda Ferro, CRNA District Director

Congratulations and welcome new graduates! We look forward to your participation in VANA.

Also congratulations to Cheryl Ruff, CRNA and Sue Roper, RN on publication of their book "Ruff's War." I am trying to organize a meeting with Cheryl and have her come and tell us first hand about the events chronicled in her book. She is on a whirlwind tour now, but has promised to come in early summer. Stay posted for time date and place.

I am on the lookout for someone who will be willing to take over the reins as District I Director when my term runs out this fall. Do not hesitate to contact me about the position at lindaferro@hotmail.com

District II Report

by Michelle Yelverton, CRNA District Director

There was a great turnout for our December Holiday Wine & Cheese Event at Belmont Country Club. Dean Mazurek, CRNA spoke on post-operative cognitive dysfunction. We had many positive comments on the speaker and faculty. Unfortunately, the request for the CEU had to be resubmitted to the AANA and we are still waiting for approval. Those who attended should hear from me in the near future regarding the credit. Baxter is sponsoring a dinner at the Palm Restaurant in Tyson's Corner on Monday, May 22. We are expecting a great turnout!

District 2 member, Louise Hershkowitz, CRNA is hot on the campaign trail for AANA President-Elect. District 2 fully supports Louise in her endeavors. Don't forget to vote! Ballots will be mailed soon!

As always, I welcome your feedback and your suggestions for District 2 events. Thank you to those who keep in contact. Your input is valued!

District III/IV Report

by Bonnie Bowman, CRNA District Director

Well, this is about half way between Spring and Summer and the day of the meeting was beautiful and I could sense the outdoors pulling on the CRNA's that attended. After all it was a Saturday, so I have a special thanks to the speakers and all the attendees for being there. We even managed to stay mostly on time! Two students from the Abington VCU campus also attended. Always good to have student involvement.

And a special thank you to Donna Binkauskus with Baxter for a donation toward the snacks. They were plentiful and available throughout the meeting.

I attended the January Board meeting in Richmond. We were busy to say the least. The meeting was before the planned lobby day, and National Nurse Anesthetist Week, but the advertorial was out and one was given to all of our legislators. I have some copies and can get one to anyone who would like to see it. During lobby day most of our state legislators will speak to CRNA's from their districts so it is not just a hand out the swag and go. I don't know how many have access to the Sunday Richmond Times Dispatch (cir 500,000 +) But there will be copies at the Educational meeting in Roanoke.

(continued on page 6)

On to the meeting: It was great. All of the speakers had timely messages. Peter DeForest CRNA spoke on presenting ourselves to the public. He touched on public speaking and presence and how to do a PPS presentation. The point that will most likely stay with most of us is that PPS is fun and easy-IF YOU HAVE A TEEN IN THE HOUSE WHO CAN DO IT. Lois Stewart CRNA gave an update on the drug we either love or hate- Ketamine. There is a lot of new research on this old warhorse and it is GOOD. It is opening up new areas in pain research and control.

Cathy Harrison CRNA our current VANA president gave the update. The most vocal discussion centered on the new nursing practice doctorate. Your director was under the impression that it was a done deal but apparently it is back on the table. Our association is actively watching this one. Fred Hill CRNA, the last speaker, gave an animated presentation on anesthesia technique and awareness. The stats have not changed in 20 years, neither have those in our care most affected. The bottom line of his lecture was our vigilance is still the most important tool in preventing this from happening.

I attended the District 5 Winter meeting and thought about the opportunity to have a meeting of that scale somewhere west of US 29. At one time the State meetings moved around the state, but this has not happened in a long while. It is going to happen again this year so watch the Monitor and the web site for the place and date for upcoming state meetings. Any way, I threw this out to those attending and the response was whole hearted. There is a need for a single day venue in the I29-I81 corridor such as the meeting in Richmond.

When I got home my little scaredy cat came to be petted. She was a rescue and it took years of patience to get to the point where she would stand at arms length and allow herself to be touched. With the same patience a meeting in our District can be nurtured and we can watch it grow.

District V Report

by Renee Greenfield, CRNA District Director

District 5 had a very successful WINTER WORKSHOP this March. We had an attendance of about 150 and we made a profit of over \$2500! WE would like to thank Gary Hahn on his hard work for a very successful meeting. WE couldn't have done it without you Gary!

WE would like to wish Gary well as he makes his transition to Smith Mountain Lake. We will miss him, his hard work and dedication to our profession! District 3 & 4, you are lucky to get Gary as one of your new district members!

District 5 would also like to encourage everyone to vote in the upcoming elections, but also to spread the word to all of your CRNA friends around the AANA.

Vote for Louise Hershkowitz, CRNA, MSHA for AANA President-Elect



A **Clinician** in touch with the everyday realities of nurse anesthesia practice
An **Educator** for nurse anesthesia students, colleagues and other professionals
An **Advocate** for nurse anesthetists at local, state and national levels
An **Inclusive Leader and Mentor** for individuals and CRNA organizations
A **Visionary** who brings people together to find new solutions and achieve extraordinary results

It is imperative that we create a culture of open communication between AANA's leaders and members. We must work together for the future of nurse anesthesia!

I want to hear from you and ask for your support! Please contact me at:

Telephone: 703-476-0671

E-mail: louisehershkowitz@yahoo.com

Your New Student Representative

Greetings to all! My name is Gina Corbett, RN, BSN and I am your student representative to the VANA. This is the first year that the position of student representative has been offered by VANA. As student representative I have had the opportunity to learn the inside workings of the Association, as well as, give a student's perspective to the board meetings. While not a voting member, the student representative is encouraged to be an active participant. The position is a year long commitment and will rotate through the Virginia Nurse Anesthesia Programs, starting with Virginia Commonwealth University. This summer Old Dominion University will be able to elect the new representative from their student body. The following year will be the Navy's turn. Since my induction at the joint state meeting last fall, I have attended the Leadership Retreat in October; the Fall Assembly of States in November, Lobby Day in January, and the Mid-Year Assembly in April. Not only were these experiences educational, they were also very fun.

At this year's Mid-Year Assembly, I had the pleasure of meeting students from ODU and the Navy Program. Along with several of my classmates and members of VANA, we gathered in DC to learn about lobbying. We were brought up to date on health care issues that are important to the AANA, such as Medicare, pay for service, MDA reimbursement for clinical teaching of residents vs. SRNAs, and Federal sponsorship of SRNA education. After long days of learning about lobbying, we were set free upon our state's Congressional Aides. Under the guidance of experienced CRNAs, we students played a key part in the lobbying efforts. We all stepped up to the plate and directly addressed the Aides. We educated them on the issues and brought a face to the financial sacrifices made by nurse anesthesia students. The guys from the Navy informed them of the important role CRNAs play in our Military. It was a great experience. We were able to meet students from programs other than ours while learning about an additional aspect of our profession.

As a staff nurse, I experienced first hand how a fractured professional association can have detrimental effects on the profession and patient care. I am relieved now to be a member of a profession with a strong professional organization that works toward the betterment of its members and its patients. I encourage all students to become involved. Through out the year there are many opportunities for us to participate in. For example, you can help promote nurse anesthesia by coming together with CRNAs and meeting the members of our state and federal government. Lobby Day gives us chance to meet our state representatives in Richmond, while Mid-year assembly gives us a chance to meet with the members of congress in Washington, DC. VANA also is going to be sponsoring runners in the Virginia Beach's Rock and Roll Half Marathon held over Labor Day Weekend. Not only are we looking for runners, we are also looking for volunteers to work a water station, assist in the Hospitality House, or provide medical assistance in the medical tent. The money raised will go to help People in Need (PIN), an organization that assists the homeless in the Tide Water Area. Look for the flier in this issue of The Monitor for more information. If these activities do not interest you, there are several committees that may be more to your talents and taste.

Look in your news bulletin for District happenings and board meetings. Each of us is welcome to attend any of the meetings. The district activities provide both educational and networking opportunities. At the board meetings you can learn more about what VANA does for CRNAs and students and what impact you can make.

If you have any questions or want to learn more about getting involved, please feel free to contact me. One thing I learned from attending the Student Focus at the Annual Meeting is that we are all dealing with the same stressors and issues; I look forward to hearing your ideas, suggestions, complaints and successes.

Gina Corbett, RN, BSN
Virginia Commonwealth University
corbettgm@vcu.edu

Mid Year Assembly

I was honored with the opportunity to attend the AANA Mid-year assembly and take part in learning about issues important to nurse anesthetists and their practice. One presenter stated, "We do a lot for our patients, but very little for our profession." We as nurse anesthesia students and future CRNAs may not participate much in regards to political issues that would determine our scope of practice in the future. However, we are the ones that can make a difference in our and our patients' futures. It was an eye opener to see how political decisions affected our practice. I was very impressed with the congressmen's legislative aids and their awareness of the issues that we presented to them. Most of them were very friendly and welcoming to us. The meetings also gave us the opportunity to further educate them about nurse anesthesia and its national prevalence, especially in rural areas.

Some of the topics discussed were the proposed Medicare Plan B cuts and its potential negative effects on patient care as well as job opportunities for anesthesia providers at certain healthcare facilities. A issue that hit close to home for us as students was the ASA's proposed "teaching rules" that would disrupt fair reimbursement for the teaching of SRNAs versus anesthesia residents. It was very important to make the point that although we come from two different backgrounds, we are taught the same procedures and skills related to anesthetic care. Another issue that we discussed pertained to increasing funding for nurse anesthesia education; something that all of us can relate to. Regarding medical liability, there is only one main carrier for the nurse anesthetist. This is not only impacting health care providers, but also patients' access to health care, in the face of rising premiums and out-of-pocket expenses.

I would like to thank the VANA for giving us such a great opportunity. I am also grateful to the CRNAs participating in the mid-year assembly for being so supportive and nurturing to us students. I look forward to participating in the mid-year assembly in the future.

Sincerely,
Ervina Baruti



ROCK N' ROLL 1/2 MARATHON

PRESENTED BY
SUNTRUST

CNRA's Running to Feed Hungry People

Virginia Beach, VA
September 3, 2006
Labor Day Weekend

- ✦ Top 10 Half Marathon
- ✦ Monies raised for People in Need (PIN) homeless shelter
- ✦ "CRNA's Rock" singlets for runners and t-shirts for Volunteers
- ✦ Hospitality Room available Friday night – Sunday night
- ✦ Pasta Dinner the night before the race
- ✦ Volunteer opportunities
 - Hospitality room
 - Water Stop
 - Medical Tent

Runners Contact:

Patti Bright
crnaruns@aol.com

Volunteers Contact:

Gina Corbett
corbettgm@vcu.edu

More information:

www.rnrhalf.com
www.virginiacrnas.com

Rock on!

by Patti Bright

With spring in the air, the warmer days, the longer hours of day light, what does a CRNAS thought turn to? The Rock N Roll Half Marathon that's what. We need to shake off the winter blues, store our coats, and lace up our running shoes.

If you haven't already heard the news, crnas from everywhere are heading to Va Beach on labor day weekend. What you say? Let me just fill you in. The VANA feels that as a group we need to reach out into the community to show our humanity. We are all

So lucky, we have great careers and unlimited potential. We are also the best kept secret in healthcare. So this is a great opportunity to get out from behind the mask, out of the OR and show everyone who we are.

We are gathering interested crnas and srnas who would like to challenge themselves physically and mentally to help raise money to feed the hungry. By committing to train to walk or run the rock n roll half marathon, we will be helping to feed the homeless in va beach.

We are partnering with P.I.N. (people in need) a group who feeds 50 or more people each an every Sunday evening. This group also provides nursing care and personal hygiene supplies.

Are you interested? Will you rise to the challenge? This is sure to be one of the most rewarding and physically challenging events in your life. Let me tell you about the plans that have been made to date. We are all going to be raising money. This can be done by soliciting funds from fellow co workers, neighbors, and friends. The website will have information on tips to make this fundraising a little easier.

All CRNAS, SRNAS, spouses, and significant others who are actually doing the race will be wearing the same coolmax shirt with the catchy slogan "CRNAS ROCK" on the front and on the back the statement "Nurse Anesthetists are running to feed hungry people". Think of the possibilities. This will be a great opportunity for PR and it will also show the public that CRNAS do care about their fellow man.

Not interested or unable to walk or run? You can still be a part of our team. We need you to man a waterstop, hand out metals, or work one of the medical tents. If you can't be there physically you can still participate by helping to sponsor runners with a tax deductible donation.

Now on with the plans for the weekend. VANA will have a hospitality suite. This suite will be open for runners and volunteers. We are also hosting a pre-race pasta dinner. This dinner will be attended by special guest, Congresswoman Thelma Drake and hopefully other local leaders. We will have distinct pleasure to be dining with some of the people we will be running to feed.

Don't miss out on this event!

The whole labor day weekend in Va. Beach is fun packed. The American Music Festival will have live bands up and down the boardwalk. Lets get ready to rock.

There are nearly 800 CRNAS in Virginia, just think of the impact we can make if only 25% of us come out for this event.

If you want more information contact Patti Bright at crnaruns@aol.com or 757 319 2104.

Come on CRNAS- step up-Rock out. We are a group on the move. See you on the Beach!



PRESENTED BY
SUNTRUST





Ever thought of getting involved in **YOUR** state organization?

Volunteering on a VANA committee can be very rewarding and FUN!

The board has many opportunities for you to get involved from helping to organize the annual conference to helping with the PR effort to spread the word about your profession. We welcome any time you can offer!

Interested? Curious?

Please contact the VANA office at vanacna@comcast.net for more information. Or call 804-754-4122.

Remember - the VANA Board is working for YOU. Why not get involved?

An Editorial

All RN's, LPN's, and ARNP's in VA get a copy of *Virginia Nurses Today*. The February issue had a timely Presidents Column by Teresa Haller, MSN, MBA, current president of the Virginia Nurses Association. There was no title to the column but it dealt with a very hot topic in the country today.

45,000,000:

- A. the number of people who tuned in to the last American Idol?
- B. the number of people in the Boston Washington corridor? Or
- C. the number of uninsured people in the United States?

Correct answer C, as of the end of April.

In her message Ms. Haller wants us to use our voices as professionals to speak for the uninsured and to influence healthcare policy. The uninsured are among the ones who are most vulnerable to being forgotten. We all know who they are or do we?

The uninsured and underinsured now represent 61 million people or 1 in 3 of the adult population. That means someone with no insurance lives near you or has been someone that you had as a patient in your facility yesterday or even today. Even with insurance the financial burden can overwhelm a family forcing financial hardships and even bankruptcy.

Ms. Haller sites a study of George Washington U. reported by George Askew, MD. This first appeared in the Washington Post (no date or link given). Med students went out into the DC area and presented themselves to 311 clinics as an uninsured adult or as the parent of an uninsured child who needed a wellness exam. Nearly half could not get any appointment, others had to wait two or more weeks, many had to place a deposit of 190.00 dollars or pay in full at the time of the exam (40f 5). Only 1 in40 sites saw the patient without asking for payment at the time of the visit. Many of the clinics were down right rude.

This was just the DC area. I know that the rest of Virginia and the country face the same situation. Southside counties and the Western parts of the state are the perennial "poor relations" to the eastern populated corridor of VA and some of these areas struggle to provide care. Tom O'Toole, a dean at GWU, had this to say, "Our current healthcare system is not prepared or equipped to respond to the growing segment of our community that has fallen through the cracks, making too much money for Medicaid coverage, but not enough to afford health insurance on their own. We need a better approach to connecting people to affordable health care and safeguards to keep them from becoming bankrupt trying to stay healthy."

Dr. Askew then asks us to take a moral stand to change the system. Ms. Haller does the same. I am adding my voice. It is a national shame that the country that brags on being the richest in the world does not provide adequate medical care to one third of its population. The cost of treatment for one catastrophic stroke patient will pay for a year of a clinic treating HTN. ANA in a position paper from last year calls for a "standard package of essential health care services available to all and paid for by joint public and PRIVATE (the caps are my own) funds."

Since this was written MA passed a universal health care package for residents of the state. The howls have already gone up. Al l states must follow this president for its citizens and we must be the voice for change. As Ms. Haller said, "We all have stories.... Make 2006 the year that you started telling your stories to legislators and elected officials."

Western (as in Wild West) legislators all know water flows towards money. So does health care. We can not call ourselves patient advocates if we do not speak up for the uninsured. Health care is already an issue for the 2006 elections and will definitely help define 2008. If one third of the population must make a choice between a prescription and food or heat, do you think they have a lobbyist in Richmond or on K Street?

It's YOUR Profession and YOUR Future!

Use your Voice and your Vote!

by Louise Hershkowitz, CRNA, MSHA, candidate for AANA President-Elect

VANA and AANA will be electing leaders soon to serve the associations for the Fiscal Year 2007. As a member of these professional associations, you have the opportunity to determine who will lead them to the future. Be sure to utilize this opportunity and VOTE!

AANA was founded seventy-five years ago by a forward-thinking group of nurse anesthetists who realized they needed to take control of their profession in order to determine its future.

Now we are the beneficiaries of the efforts of AANA's founders and leaders. We have the opportunity to provide the best possible anesthesia care for patients in every practice setting. But challenges to our ability to practice continue, as they have throughout our history. Are our state and national professional organizations strong enough to assure that nurse anesthesia will have the kind of future that we would want to celebrate in another seventy-five years?

Working together, we can assure that CRNAs receive the respect we deserve: recognitions as Experts in Anesthesia Care! Every CRNA must utilize the opportunity to educate patients, families and others each day about who we are and what we do. Our leaders from every practice setting and every generation must regularly interact with the public, the media, other professional organizations and government, not just when we have an issue. We must recruit, mentor and develop leaders at all levels, from our schools to our workplaces, from our educational programs to our professional associations.

Thanks to the efforts of a number of forward-thinking members, AANA has invested in building stronger state associations. With special funding for small states through the Organizational Health Allocation, and support of legislative, regulatory and judicial activities through the Strategic Reserve Fund, we have developed stronger organizations that are better equipped to respond to challenges to the profession at all levels. This has resulted, with a few notable exceptions, in protecting opportunities for CRNAs to provide the complete range of services in their communities. An increasing number of members are now involved and pro-active in the decision-making processes in our states and nationally, making us active participants in these processes, rather than re-active victims. We need more.

AANA's Leadership Development Program is reaching out to all members, providing them the opportunity to develop the skills and confidence required to lead our profession in their states and on the national level. Like the Organizational Health and Strategic Reserve initiatives, investing in developing new leaders is a long-term project, but one that will yield great benefit to those who participate and to our profession over many years.

VANA's and AANA's leaders must develop a closer and more interactive relationship with our members. Many members feel isolated from our leaders and the important decisions that they make. Seeking, recognizing and utilizing membership input must become part of the culture of the decision-making process.

And now it's up to you! Removing barriers and forging closer connections between AANA's leaders and members is key to building a stronger association and future for our profession. For seventy-five years AANA's greatest strength has been the membership of the vast majority of CRNAs, but membership alone is not enough. Now it is YOUR turn as a member to act! Less than 25% of members have voted in the past few elections. Today, you can elect leaders who will create a partnership with you and other members in determining the future of nurse anesthesia. Vote! After all, it's YOUR future.



**VOTE
for
Louise
Hershkowitz!**

**AANA
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