

MONITOR



Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists

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June 2007

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

Mid Year Assembly

By Diane Howell, CRNA, VANA President

Mid Year Assembly 2007 was another great adventure into Washington, DC, and Virginia had an excellent group of CRNA's and SRNA's as representatives. CRNA's from all parts of the state and SRNA's from all three nurse anesthesia programs in Virginia attended. For those who have not been able to attend Mid Year before, it is an excellent opportunity to learn about what your AANA staff members in Washington and Illinois do for our profession on a daily basis. We listened to several awesome lectures such as "How CRNA's Actions Affect CRNA's Patients, Practice and Profession", a great presentation by Frank Purcell, the AANA Senior Director for Federal Government Affairs; "Medicare as a Second Language: Policy and Payment Issues for CRNA's", an incredibly informative presentation by Pamela M. Kirby, JD, the AANA Associate Director for Federal Regulatory and Payment Policy; and an "Analysis of Federal Issues", a joint presentation from Frank Purcell and the Associate Director for Federal Government Affairs Brian R. Bullard. We reviewed payment for teaching rules, pay for performance information, nurse anesthesia education funding, and federal fiscal challenges and their impact on CRNA's.



As you can see, Mid Year is full of extremely helpful, and often highly critical, information that pertains to our profession and practice of anesthesia. Mid Year culminates in trips to Capital Hill, during which CRNA's get to meet their state representatives of Congress and discuss pressing issues in their regions. The representatives listen to us, and we need to be heard! If at all possible, I urge you to mark off Mid Year Assembly on your calendar for next year. There is power in numbers!!

Mid Year Assembly

By Paul M. Cornett, SRNA

Lieutenant Commander, Nurse Corps, US Navy

Last week I and five other Student Registered Nurse Anesthetists (SRNAs) from Virginia were generously invited all-expenses-paid by the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetist (VANA) to attend the AANA Mid-Year Assembly in Washington, DC. This turned out to be one of the best experiences of my professional career and I would highly recommend attendance by any other SRNA or CRNA. Our experience began with attendance at a VANA annual spring board meeting on Saturday night. There we witnessed not only the care but also the professionalism of the board members in executing their duties on behalf of the Virginia CRNAs. This meeting was followed by an evening dinner where we had a chance to get to know the board members and to learn of their passion for their profession.



The formal Mid-Year Assembly started promptly the next morning and the entire Assembly was extremely focused. Sunday and Monday were filled with very informative presentations and discussions of topics such as the legal basis for our profession, how it is regulated, valued and paid for. The first day was followed by discussion of some of the key challenges facing the profession of Nurse Anesthesia in this country. The region breakouts were also extremely educating. We attended the breakout session for region 2. During the breakout session we were able to hear first hand from the individual state presidents in our region about some of the advances and legislative challenges that were being faced in each state. I remember being so impressed first by the dynamic nature of the profession in each state and then how our professional organization was meeting legislative challenges. Issues such as supervision, reimbursement, prescriptive authority, independent practice and the current threat of Anesthesia Assistants (AAs) were all touched on to various degrees by each state president.

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2006 - 2007 VANA Board of Directors

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During the Assembly we also learned about the current legislative concerns and the agenda for our profession, including recent Medicare cuts, nurse anesthesia training monies, reimbursement issues and recently introduced legislation for which the organization was advocating passage. We were coached not only on what but how to discuss these issues in an intelligent and persuasive manner and we heard first hand from an incredible panel of leaders how these issues were important for the profession and healthcare in our country. Additionally, we got to hear from those members running for public office in the organization. I was very impressed not only by the selfless dedication by those running for office, but also by the already tremendous track record of each candidate for having served the organization and various levels in the past.



But the highlight of the meeting was actually going up to the capital on days 3 and 4. Prior to going there we got to hear from several pro-CRNA congressmen and then observe some role playing to help us better discuss the issues later that day. We visited our congressmen and women both in the house and senate in groups of 3-6 (CRNAs & SRNAs) to discuss the issues we were now informed on and to advocate or lobby for what we saw as both important for our profession but also for their constituents as well. To say the least, this was the most first hand and informative class you can take in civics. Understanding how our congress works and especially how to effectively inform them on issues one is concerned about is extremely important for any citizen. And many thanks to the preparatory leg work of our state organization and particularly our Political Action Committee (PAC)

chairman Patty Bright, we usually had prearranged meetings with each congressman's legislative assistant and were able to discuss the issues in a face to face manner as well as hand them written information on exactly what we were lobbying for.

Lastly, I would say I really enjoyed lunch and evening social activities which everyone seemed to partake in. This helped foster a strong spirit of camaraderie and we were able to form many friendships both with other students (there were 181 in attendance) and CRNAs. I can definitely see now why everyone says that the Mid-Year Assembly is often said to be the most enjoyable event for the national organization. I just can't thank VANA enough for inviting me to attend and now look forward to getting involved with the state organization once I graduate this summer. And once again, I can see the benefit highly recommend involvement in their local state organization for any SRNA or CRNA.



The **VANA is seeking a new peer assistance contact person** to act as our Virginia representative to the AANA peer Assistance and help recovering CRNAs in Virginia. Anyone interested should review the Peer assistance information on the AANA website for information and then contact the VANA office at 804-754-4122 or vanacrna@comcast.net.

The mission of AANA Peer Assistance includes:

- Assessing the nature and impact of the disease of addiction on nurse anesthesia practice.
- Educating nurse anesthetists, students, employers and the public about addiction.
- Investigating the availability and effectiveness of treatment modalities.
- Advocating research into the education, prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery of addiction.
- Assisting individuals or organizations when requested in the formulation of guidelines regarding intervention, treatment, aftercare and reentry into the workplace of addicted nurse anesthetists.

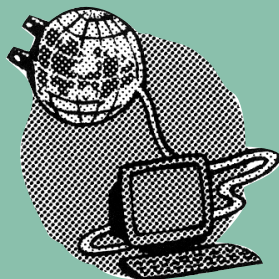
More information can be found on the AANA website at www.aana.com then click on Resources/Wellness and Peer Assistance

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 Diane Howell



Did you know the role of your CRNA-PAC? Yes, they want our money – but for excellent reasons! CRNA-PAC had a record breaking cycle for 2005-2006, raising nearly 1.5 million dollars. This kept our PAC the *TOP* nursing PAC in the country. Plus, of the nearly 3500 federal political action committees nationwide, CRNA-PAC ranked among the top 4% of monies raised in 2005-2006. What do they do with the money, and why do they need more? Well, these funds help keep CRNA voices strong in Washington, which means we advance our interests in regards to reversing Medicare cuts, strengthening the education of CRNA's, and promoting anesthesia patient safety. It also protects what we love to do – our ability to deliver anesthesia.

Don't stop the money from coming in now! The CRNA-PAC has accomplished a lot for our profession, but there are still matters ahead. The fact that our Congress is now under Democratic control means we have new relationships to develop and foster, especially with the leadership of the both Houses and the health committees. The new members of Congress – those first term, freshman legislators – probably don't know who we are or what we do so well; we need them to understand our profession, they need to hear our voices. The CRNA-PAC will make this happen.

Healthcare is likely to remain a hot topic in the upcoming Presidential campaign, and AANA is in a prime spot to lobby the presidential candidates regarding the value, quality and importance of our work.

Our donations to the CRNA-PAC are more important than ever if we intend to keep up with the anesthesiologists PAC, which raised over 2 million dollars in 2005-2006. AANA needs each and every one of us to donate, and now is a great time to start. And remember, CRNA-PAC is bipartisan – the objective is advancing CRNA's interests in better healthcare policy, regardless of your political affiliation. So please give today!

For more information about CRNA-PAC, call Shari Dexter at 202-484-8403, or contact her via email @ sdexter@aanadc.com. *Thank you!*

Thank You

On behalf of the Old Dominion University Nurse Anesthesia Program, Stacy Hux and I would like to thank the VANA for giving us such a wonderful opportunity. We were able to attend this year's Mid-Year Assembly in Washington D.C., all expenses paid, and to see first hand what our organization does for us. It was an amazing experience and one that we will never forget.

The VANA and AANA are powerful organizations that we as students need to become active in now. It is up to us to keep nurse anesthesia strong for many years to come. If given the opportunity, I would recommend that everyone attend this conference. This is a life-changing experience. We were able to meet with congressman, senators and health legislative administrators firsthand to talk about the issues that impact us.

With many thanks,
Scott Hawkes and Stacy Hux

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You live in District 5
Director: Stephan Blanchard, CRNA
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District Reports

District I Report

by Linda Ferro, CRNA District Director

A very special "thank you" to Traci Olsen and Baxter pharmaceuticals for sponsoring 3 wonderful dinner educational meetings.

March 8, at Bobbywood in Norfolk, 25 CRNA'S had the pleasure of hearing Paul Hertz, MD speak about the "Confessions of a Desflurane Abuser." Dr Hertz came to us from University of Illinois, Chicago

On April 11, 22 CRNA'S were present at One Fish Two Fish, in Virginia Beach to hear Michael Jopling, MD discuss "Low Flow Anesthesia Using LMA's and ET Tubes. Dr Jopling came from Mt Carmel St Ann's Hospital, in Westerville, Ohio where he is the Chairman, Dept. of Anesthesiology.

This same lecture was given on April 12 at Le Yaca, in Williamsburg for the anesthesia providers living on the peninsula. 8 CRNA's attended.

District II Report

by Michelle Yelverton, CRNA, MSN District Director

The VANA District II Welcomes Sarah Lindsey Yelverton. Born January 17, 2007, 7 lbs. 10 oz., 20 inches long. Congrats!!



District III/IV Report

by Gary D. Hahn, CRNA

As the new year begins, there have been some changes in District 3 & 4. Bonnie Bowman, CRNA, who has diligently served this district, stepped down as the District Director in December. All District 3 & 4 CRNA's thank Bonnie for her dedication, conviction, and hard work on behalf of this district as our representative to the Board of Directors of the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists. Effective immediately, Gary Hahn, CRNA will complete Bonnie's term on the Board of Directors. I relocated to the Roanoke area in May of 2006, having been an active member of District 5 in Richmond for the last 31 years. I am employed by Carilion Professional Services with my primary clinical responsibilities at Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital. If any member of this VANA District has read this far, I would like to assure you that my intent is not to reproduce what is done in the Richmond area or anywhere else in Virginia. This District is unique in its own right—rural in many ways and very expansive. This lends to special considerations as to what our goals are and what is expected of us as CRNA's and members of the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists. My primary mission is to find out what it is your state professional organization has NOT done for you! If you feel that you are not represented, then I need to know that. If you want to know what it is that it should be doing—I want to know. I am not shy, and I do not want you to be either! If new attitudes, policies, and approaches are in order, I want to hear them from you. I AM NOT ASKING FOR ANY VOLUNTEERS—JUST IDEAS! It is my intent, if still your representative to the VANA Board of Directors, to have a District 3 & 4 membership meeting in the fall. This meeting can be what you want it to be—continuing education, business of the VANA, or the networking of CRNA's of southwest Virginia and what is relevant to them—not those of Richmond, Tidewater, or Northern Virginia. Your professional organization can only be as effective as the members that make it up. I look forward to hearing from you with questions or suggestions to make District 3 & 4 a relevant and vital part of the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

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District V Report

by *Stephan Blanchard, CRNA*

Greetings to All -

Well it's been a great 3rd quarter for District 5. On February 17th, the District 5 Winter Work Shop was held. Following a great meeting the 'Meet & Greet' was held in the lobby hosted by yours truly and District 5. Chairman of the Winter Workshop, Danny Frasca, CRNA, and the committee did yet another wonderful job of organizing one of the best meetings in this region. Please read Mr. Frasca's article detailing the success of the annual event.

After the meeting about 70 CRNAs and students met in the lobby for a great 2-3 hours of mingling with colleagues. Many old friends were able to catch up on lost time. A beautiful spread of food and open bar allowed members to stick around and enjoy the moment. I am looking forward to making this an annual addition to the District 5 Winter Workshop so next year make plans for it, invite your spouse to join in and take advantage of the opportunity to meet your own colleagues, spark new friendships and kindle old ones.

In April I attended the AANA Mid-year Assembly. Joining me from District 5 were two students, Marian Haselman, SRNA and Michelle Dayday, SRNA. Both attend the Virginia Commonwealth University/Medical College of Virginia nurse anesthesia program. Virginia was represented by approximately 10 CRNAs and students from all over the state. What a delight to have two highly motivated and inspirational individuals joining the Virginia contingency on Capitol Hill. All three nurse anesthesia programs were represented by quality individuals soon to join the ranks of the nurse anesthesia profession. Be proud, they represented you well. Led by our Federal Political Director (FPD), Patti Bright, CRNA, we walked Capitol Hill meeting with senators, representatives and healthcare legislative assistants all over the hill. We were armed with knowledge of the issues and made our statement. It was one of the most inspiring, empowering and fulfilling events I have participated in since becoming a CRNA. And, you think its going to be hard—but its not. Anyone can do it. More than 550 CRNAs and students met in DC to deliver our message personally. This event is open to all members and students and I encourage you to attend next year. I lost count of the number of times I heard this was the best meeting of the year. Come join us. You won't regret it.

This year, there were three main issues. One of the issues discussed was nurse education funding particularly monies used in advanced practice nursing specialties and nurse anesthesia. This money helps open new programs, expand and improve existing programs and aids SRNAs across the country. Secondly, was the Teaching Rules Legislation HR bill 1932. This bill emphasizes parity among MD residents and SRNAs residents with respect to government sponsored reimbursement. In other words, it maintains a level playing field for both providers so as not to make training MD residents more lucrative for hospitals or anesthesia groups. And last but not least, Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement. As we all know reimbursement is trending downward. Although, almost all healthcare providers are on the hill clamoring the same argument, it is important to make our voice heard. It's better to be at the table instead of on the menu. For further details on these important issues please contact me, Diane Howell, CRNA, VANA President or Patti Bright, CRNA, FPD with your questions.

Have you checked out the
newly re-designed VANA website lately?
We welcome your suggestions and comments.
www.virginiacrnas.com



Update on Physician Supervision Issue

By Diane Howell, CRNA, VANA President

From the late 1990's to 2001, the issue of physician supervision of nurse anesthetists was before Congress and Federal agencies. A final rule published in the *Federal Register* on November 13, 2001 (66FR 56762) resolved the issue with an allowance for the governor to notify CMS in writing if their state desired to opt out of the supervision requirement for CRNA's. Governors have certain prerequisites that must be met, and include consultation with the state's board of medicine and nursing, the determination that the opt out is consistent with state law, and the decision that is in the best interests of the state's citizens to opt out.

Fourteen states have since exercised their right to opt out from the Part A physician supervision mandate of nurse anesthetists. These states include Alaska, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin. In these states, it is no surprise that anesthesia care is being provided safely. Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack wrote "Since the opt out decision in December 2001, the opt out has been a remarkable success in many areas ... Absolutely no reports have been made of problems or changes in the quality of care provided . . . This decision has also eliminated the confusion created because of the inconsistency between Medicare reimbursement rules and state law." The Chief medical Officer of the Nebraska Health and human Services System, Dr. Richard Raymond, said "States are in the best position to assess their needs. Opting out will allow hospitals to utilize CRNA's in ways that fit their own unique circumstances."

Anesthesia continues to be safe, just as the AANA and CRNA's across the country said it would be. Medical liability premiums are often used as an index for quality of outcomes for patients, and according to CAN, the largest underwriter of professional liability coverage for CRNA's, nurse anesthetists' liability premiums today are still 50% lower in real terms than what they were in 1988. In the states that have opted out, average rates for CRNA's are up only 6%, far less than those experienced by other providers and just under the average national increase of 8%.

Lastly, public officials, hospital administrators and surgeons have indicated that the opt outs have been beneficial, and hasn't changed or undermined the clinical relationship between healthcare providers.

(Info obtained from AANA's Office of Federal Government Affairs)

THANK YOU for making the 2007 District 5 Winter Workshop – A HUGE Success!

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of myself and the conference committee I would like to thank all who supported the VANA district 5 Winter Workshop on February 17th. It was a wonderful success. A number of lecturers who speak nationally were quite impressed with the local support given to a district meeting. We had 180 attendees and the meeting was one of the best turn outs to date. I would also like to personally congratulate the members of the conference committee: Kevin Baker, Nino Bianchi, Rene Greenfield, Tom Kinahan, Steve Laubacher and Sue Wright for all their hard work and dedication putting this meeting together. Please note the the new date for 2008's Winter Workshop is February 2nd. Please mark your calendars!

Daniel Frasca CRNA MSN

Mid-Year Assembly 2007 - Student Experience

By Lt. Christian Pronk

Wow – what a great experience! Having received an invitation extended by VANA to attend the AANA Mid-Year Assembly I experienced a comprehensive introduction to both state and federal nurse anesthesia associations. As a student in the Navy Nurse Corps Anesthesia Program (NNCAP), class of 2008, I had no prior exposure to either association. The four-day conference immersed attendees in policy issues most relevant to nurse anesthetists.



I arrived at the Capital Hilton in time to attend the VANA Board of Directors meeting and was immediately welcomed, introduced to board members and students from Virginia Commonwealth University and Old Dominion University. The meeting focused on discussions regarding budgetary issues, continuing education, advocacy and leadership, culminating in a wonderful surf and turf dinner during which I had a chance to talk with nurse anesthetists from around the state.

The Mid-Year Assembly kicked off with a presentation on CRNA advocacy and Medicare basics. Both presenters succeeded in presenting unfamiliar topics in an easily understandable format. In an effort to reinforce some key advocacy strategies the staff participated in a few role playing scenarios. Finally, questions, such as, the specifics of independent practice and Medicare reimbursement were outlined and clarified. Later that afternoon I attended an open forum mediated by the State Government Relations Committee Chairman. The primary discussion focused on anesthesia assistants, specifically, restrictions in practice, geographic prevalence, their recent acceptance by the Veterans Administration, and limitations regarding independence. Also discussed was the autonomy of nurse anesthetists and the introduction of the Computer-Assisted Personalized Sedation (CAPS) device.

Terry Wicks opened Monday morning by revealing how much his term as AANA president has been shaped by his simply “living the dream.” His genuine enthusiasm proved infectious to all in attendance, and was followed by a report from the association treasurer and speeches from individual members nominated to the Board of Directors. Their individual qualifications included, but were not limited to, years of providing anesthetic care, doctoral degrees, prior elected positions at both state and local levels and previous military service. Listening to these aspiring members petition for a seat on the future board confirmed for me the vibrance of this organization.

In contrast, I attended what initially appeared to be a rather pessimistic assessment on the future of a doctorate for entry level to nurse anesthesia practice. However, upon listening to the complete assessment of the presenter it appeared that the requirement would simply have to be pushed another ten years forward in order to ensure adequate infrastructure. The “achilles” appeared to be the lack of adequately prepared faculty and questions regarding degrees conferred by nurse anesthesia programs not affiliated with nursing schools. The days activities concluded with a regional association breakout where individual presidents gave a brief report of specific state issues.

Brian Bullard moderated a SRNAdvocate unplugged session where a new CRNA discussed some of the issues for students preparing to graduate, sit for the certification exam, negotiate a job, and prepare to enter practice. He answered a number of questions candidly and tried to provide perspective. This session was followed by a reception which provided an opportunity to mingle with fellow students, nurse anesthetists, and members of the AANA Board of Directors.



Tuesday’s presentations were geared to focus on individual legislators who were allies of the AANA. Congressmen Bart Stupak (D-MI) and Mike Rogers (R-MI) provided explanations of what motivated them to be involved with politics, and why they chose to support the nurse anesthetist profession. Congressman Stupak discussed his proposed legislation (H.R. 1932), that improves reimbursement under Medicare for teaching both student nurse anesthetists and anesthesia residents. Afterwards there was an opportunity for photographs with the congressman. Not as exciting, however, definitely relevant were the following two presentations concerning quality improvement and health care reform. Thankfully these discussions remained apolitical, acknowledging and assessing problems without attempting to assign blame on any particular political party. Appropriately, nurse anesthetists were considered as a viable solution to effecting decreased costs in health care system.

Prior to embarking on our journey to “the Hill” we received a humorous yet at times heart felt address from Paul Begala. Begala, a straight-shooter from Texas, CNN pundit, and former political adviser to President Bill Clinton expressed how fortunate we were to live in a country where you can petition your government without fear of reprisal. Furthermore, he expressed optimism related to the involvement of associations such as the AANA in providing impetus for change and ultimately doing their part to shape future health care. Then it was off to Capital Hill.

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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?

(continued from page 8)

Our first few visits on the hill were with the Legislative Assistant (LA) for health affairs representing our congressmen from Virginia. A number of these individuals were not only very young but most were also new to health care. This provided a unique opportunity to educate them regarding health care, specifically, the nurse anesthetist's role in the delivery of anesthesia to their constituents. They were all very receptive and appeared genuinely enthusiastic to hear about our chosen profession. We also met with Senator Webb's LA for health affairs, and shared a very nice personal meeting with Congresswoman Thelma Drake (R-VA). She and her LA were very personable and made us feel right at home.

I must say, I thoroughly enjoyed this event. The conference not only introduced me to VANA and the AANA, it also allowed me to "get my feet wet" in policy making and political advocacy. I met members from VANA who encouraged my participation and were energetic to provide mentorship. This enthusiasm from the state association was reaffirmed when interacting with nurse anesthetists and students from around the country. What a valuable experience that I would recommend to any one interested in advocacy. I new I made the right choice pursuing a career as a nurse anesthetist, likewise, Mid-Year Assembly served as validation of my decision. Thank you for this opportunity!

Annual Fall Conference Coming!

By Stephen Wereszynski, CRNA

It is time to start making plans to attend the VANA annual fall conference. In trying to ensure that we reach everyone, the conference is now scheduled to travel around the state. This year we will be at the Reston Hyatt on 6-7 Oct. We asked for your feedback. We listened to what you said. So this year we have altered the format of our conference to include a **six hour airway workshop** run by Gray McCall, CRNA. The last two hours of this workshop will be a hands-on session with equipment provided by our exhibitors. The conference also features additional topics like Risk Management, a Legal Perspective; Physiological Basis for Neuroanesthesia, Anesthetic Considerations in the Care of the Spinal Cord Injured Patient; Perioperative Use of Celebrex; Considerations For A Safe Office-based Anesthesia Practice; and of course our student presentations. We are also supported by over 20 vendors and that number is still growing.

I expect that we will max out our conference room capacity early and **STRONGLY** encourage you to make your conference and room reservations **NOW**. Early Fall in northern VA can be absolutely gorgeous. We are close enough to DC for the family to enjoy seeing the monuments, air and space museum, and many of the other local highlights. The hotel is located in the Reston Center, with additional shopping and great restaurants close.

This is an excellent time to meet up with colleagues from around the state, take in a great conference, and to see what is happening with your VANA. Come be a part of this exciting program! We will certainly be even bigger and better than last year! Registration information can be found on the VANA web site: www.virginiacrnas.com. Download and submit the forms, make plans with your friends, and come join us in Reston!

Students Take The Hill

by Michelle Dayday and Mariann Haselman

Mid Year Spring Assembly April 2007

The Mid-Year assembly has been one of the most rewarding experiences we have had since school started.

We presumed the Mid-Year Assembly was a VANA function yet discovered that it was an AANA event with over 500 attendants. We met CRNA's and SRNA's from all over the country and have made some great new friends. As great as the annual meeting was, this meeting was far and above more informative and empowering as this meeting brought everyone together toward common goals.

We recommend this meeting to anyone interested in attending. The first two days are spent in meetings and lectures. We learned about the issues relevant to the AANA, VANA, and to all the other surrounding states in our region. The AANA informs you very well to understand the issues to be discussed with the representatives as well as preparing you to voice these issues in a succinct way that leads to greater attention from the health legislative aides and/ or representatives who may be on limited time.

We feel more committed to our profession after gaining insight into the issues that may affect our careers. The issues on hand involved Medicare part B reimbursements, nursing education funding cuts (including that of SRNA's), and equal reimbursement for SRNA and resident supervision.

We spent two days with Virginia CRNA's and other SRNA's going from appointment to appointment with the representatives. We were able to chime in and add how important the funding for nursing education is as we are currently representing that population dependent on financial aid as SRNA's. We also emphasized that the issues at hand will ultimately affect their constituents.

Astonishingly, upon our return back to Richmond, we found out that our summer financial aid had been cut. Our classmates are shocked and we are all frantically seeking alternative sources of funding. At this point, we haven't heard if this is related to the federal nursing education budget cuts or if it is something specific to VCU, but we now realize how important it is to be at the helm and to have an impact on the issues that are being decided for us.

There is no question in our minds that we will be involved in the AANA. It's our profession and our voices need to be heard. One of the representative speakers, Mike Rogers, used a quote in describing the pro- side of lobbying that just struck us, so we will share it with you, "You are NOT lobbying...you are participating in the greatest democracy in the USA." It is so empowering to realize that we have a voice.

We thank VANA for sponsoring us and giving us this wonderful opportunity to witness the movers and shakers in action and to get a firsthand look at how much work and dedication it takes to ensure that our organization remains in the forefront of issues that may affect our practice.

CRNA's Rock!!

**Rock and Roll
Half Marathon
Virginia Beach, VA**

**Sunday,
September 2nd**

**Come Join Your
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VANA will host several events before and during the Rock and Roll Half Marathon including:

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Contact person:
Patti Bright
crnaruns@aol.com
757-319-2104
or the VANA office



RUN WITH VANA!
\$60
Runners with the VANA receive a CRNA's Rock running shirt and enjoy our hospitality events.

Are you already registered to run?
Let us know.

Make Checks Payable to VANA and mail to:
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Richmond, VA 23233
Note in the Memo:

VANA NEEDS VOLUNTEERS FOR THE MARATHON.

Help with water stations, the pasta dinner, hospitality, and many other opportunities.

Make checks payable to PIN and mail to:

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2231 Oak Bay Lane
Richmond, VA 23233
804-754-4122
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**Not available on September 3rd?
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