



To & Fro

A Publication of the Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists • Volume 69 • Spring 2012

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists CRNAs

- Represent nearly 150 years of quality anesthesia
- Safely administer approximately 32 million anesthetics in the US every year
- Represented by 44,000 CRNAs nationwide and over 1100 here in Georgia
- Are the sole anesthesia providers in nearly 100% of rural hospitals throughout the country
- Practice in every type of clinical setting
- Provide high quality, safe, efficient and cost effective anesthesia care

Mission Statement

The Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists is a non-profit organization committed to advancing patient safety by supporting and furthering the practice of nurse anesthesia in Georgia.

Vision Statement

Recognized leaders who are committed to patient safety, practice autonomously to the fullest extent of their scope of practice, and are consummate professionals with 100% of its members belonging to the AANA/ GANA, and are fully reimbursed for all anesthesia services.

Report from the President

All Politics Is Local

by Brent L. DuBois, Jr., CRNA, MN



Well, we made it through another legislative session with our CRNA practice intact. I have learned over the years that big changes are shot down pretty easily. The real threats are the little tweaks to this legislation or that regulation that sneak up on you unexpectedly. Thankfully we have a very active lobby and CRNA representation on the Georgia Board of Nursing. I would like to thank all the CRNAs who participated in the grass roots effort during the 2012 legislative session. We had a very productive Capitol Day during the legislative session. We were able to meet with Secretary of State Brian Kemp and discuss our concerns about his legislation to restructure the licensing boards and remove licensing and disciplinary powers from the professional boards to the control of a consumer board. This legislation was ultimately pulled from consideration.

I hope you are aware that the GANA Board has been very busy protecting our scope of practice and increasing CRNA visibility. Some of our activities are outlined below.

The Public Relations Committee, chaired by Maegan Brass, is working on a CRNA bill board. We are excited to bring CRNA visibility to Georgia's general population.

Daniel Dell, chair of the Government Relations Committee, has brought some South Georgia appeal to our cause. This diversity is great, as our lobbyist is from Tifton. Our GRC has done a great job bridging relationships with rural hospitals and health care associations. We have also tasked our executive director,

Christy Dunkelberger, with monitoring Georgia regulatory agencies that also impact Georgia CRNA practices.

Richard Douberly, our Political Action Committee Chair, is organizing a PAC fundraiser at our annual meeting this year in Savannah. I can assure you you'll get your money's worth at this event. Remember GANA PAC allocates funds to the State Legislature, while CRNA PAC of the AANA supports CRNA friendly legislators in Washington DC.

I urge you as a Georgia CRNA to become politically active at the grassroots level in your local community. The GANA needs active CRNAs engaged in the local community on an ongoing basis to establish relationships and to act as a resource for health care issues. As former Speaker of the House, Tip O'Neal, always said, "All politics is local."

Our Federal Political Director has continued to do an outstanding job for us at the national level. Steve Smith has developed an amazing rapport with all of Georgia's U.S. Senators and Representatives. At Mid Year Assembly it was great to be able to push CRNA issues at a national level. I can not thank the CRNA nurse anesthesia program directors enough for sending SRNAs to MYA. When a group of CRNAs and students show up in such large numbers that they have to squeeze into a conference room, that legislator takes note.

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From the Executive Director

by Christy A. Dunkelberger, Esq.

AANA Elections

Once again GANA is calling on its members to help put Georgia on the national map! Two Georgia CRNAs are on the AANA ballot in 2012. Leslie Ann Jeter is running for AANA Region 2 Director, and Stephen D. Smith is running for AANA Region 2 Nominating Committee. GANA is extremely proud to support Leslie and Steve. Both are currently active in the GANA and have served as its Past President. They have a long history of work and dedication on behalf of the nurse anesthesia profession and they deserve to represent Georgia CRNAs at the national level. Please join GANA and show your support for Leslie and Steve.

As many of you already know, Janice Izlar is currently serving as AANA President-elect. She will assume the role of AANA President at the AANA Annual Meeting in August 2012, in San Francisco. Please plan to attend this meeting in order to have a large Georgia contingent on hand to show overwhelming Georgia support and encouragement as Janice takes office.

2012 Legislative Session

The Georgia legislature ended its election year session when the gavel sounded on Georgia's 2012 session which adjourned sine die on March 29th. Some Bills of interest are summarized below:

SB 445 was introduced by Senator Bill Hamrick on behalf of the Secretary of State Brian Kemp. This 800 + page bill attempted to restructure the professional licensing boards. The bill created a new position for a director of professional licensing and established a seven member consumer board that would assume certain responsibilities now in the hands of the professionals appointed to the various boards. The current boards would still exist in an advisory capacity. There was tremendous opposition from numerous health care boards and health care professionals, including nurses. There were even several attempts to carve certain boards out of the bill as autonomous entities. As a result, Secretary Kemp pulled this bill, but indicated that he plans to bring it back in 2013. GANA will monitor.

HB 972 was introduced by Rep. Tom Weldon as an effort to combat the spread of pain management clinics, or so-called "pill mills". The bill gave the Georgia Composite Medical Board the authority to license and regulate pain management clinics. The bill allowed only physicians to own a pain clinic. This bill passed both chambers with some amendments, but the final conference version was never brought up for a vote before the session ended.

SB 386 was introduced by Senator Johnny Grant on behalf of advanced practice nurses. This bill would have allowed APRNs to order radiographic imaging tests

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Need Malpractice Insurance?

Contact AANA Insurance Services
at 1-800-343-1368
or obtain insurance information
from the AANA website.

Record Turnout for the 2012 AANA Mid-Year Assembly in Washington, DC

by Steve Smith CRNA, MA



Wow, Georgia turned out in record breaking numbers this year for the 2012 AANA Mid-Year Assembly in Washington, DC (MYA). Georgia was represented by 40 CRNAs and SRNAs. Nationally there were over 800 members of the nurse anesthesia profession represented. The Georgia members were there advocating for Georgia CRNAs' scope of practice rights. We spent 2 days familiarizing ourselves with current issues and then all day Tuesday, April 17th sending our message to Capitol Hill. We visited all 13 representatives and the 2 senators from Georgia. We were actually able to meet and directly talk to 8 of them.

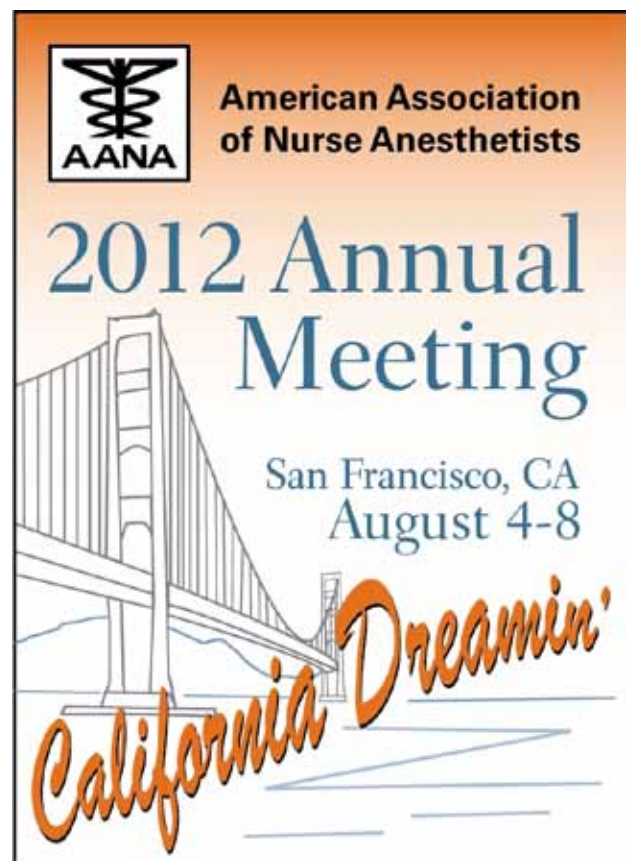
During the course of the meeting, Leslie Jeter and I were able to participate in the Student Mentoring Program. The primary goal is to mentor and produce future leaders of the AANA. The AANA PAC event was held this year at the Hay Adams Hotel overlooking the White House, Washington Monument and Jefferson Memorial. It was quite a spectacular view. Janice Izlar, Leslie Jeter, Martha Kral and I attended this event. Please take time to "Like us" on Facebook (www.gana.org) and view some of the great pictures taken throughout the meeting. Leslie Jeter and I also participated in the "Meet the Candidates" reception which was held for those AANA members running on the AANA ballot this year. We were both introduced at the Meeting on Monday morning and Leslie gave an outstanding speech in her bid for AANA Region 2 Director. Her speech can be viewed at www.aana.com. When your ballot is delivered to you the second week in May please remember to support your Georgia candidates. Please vote for Leslie Jeter for AANA Region 2 Director and Stephen D. Smith for AANA Region 2 Nominations Committee.

The messages we took to Capitol Hill this year were: CRNAs Provide Access to Safe and Affordable Healthcare, Ensure Patient Access to Pain Care, Support Nurse Anesthesia Workforce Development and Protect Medicare from Threats of Huge SGR Cuts. Our number 1 priority this year was Pain Management. As you know pain management is and always has been within a CRNA's professional scope of practice. We have been reimbursed directly for essential chronic pain management services for well over a decade by Medicare. In 2011 the Medicare agency let stand two Medicare Administrative Contractors (MAC) deny direct reimbursement of CRNA chronic pain services. These two decisions by the Noridian and WPS MACs have had significant impact on care for patients with chronic pain in rural and other medically-underserved areas of the upper Midwest and Rocky Mountain states where CRNAs are the primary providers of chronic pain care.

Our message to Congress is for them to write HHS and Medicare and urge the agency to protect patient access to pain care services and resume direct reimbursement of CRNA services. Please do not be so naïve as to think that just because we are not affected here in

Georgia that it won't happen here. You can act now by going to the "Care to be Counted" site on the members only side at www.aana.com. It only takes 3 minutes to get a letter off to your representative and two senators.

In closing, I would like to reemphasize what an honor it has been to attend this year's AANA Mid-Year Assembly, the premier conference for federal issues and advocacy shaping the practice and profession of nurse anesthesia. Again, I would encourage you all to visit the "Care to be Counted" site and review our current issues at stake to our practice. It could very well be your practice that is affected tomorrow. Make plans to attend next year's MYA meeting in April 2013. It will be the single most important intervention you can do for your fellow CRNAs. ■





Update from the AANA

by Sharon Pearce, CRNA

Dear Colleagues,

I am just home from the Midyear Assembly where nearly 800 CRNAs/SRNAs descended on Capitol Hill! Region 2 and 7 leaders attended a retreat conducted by John McFadden, Region 7 Director, and myself. There was a true sharing of ideas and state's best practices. I believe that all came away invigorated with information to take back to their home state.

Ira Gunn, an AANA legend, was laid to rest at Arlington Cemetery in a memorable service. Her contributions to our profession will always be remembered.

The AANA Annual Meeting in San Francisco this August will be here before you know it, what are you waiting for? Register as soon as possible on the AANA website.

As always, thank you for your ongoing support of your professional association and for allowing me the opportunity to serve you. If I can be of any assistance to you, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Sharon Pearce, CRNA, MSN

LEADING OFF

Be Part of the "In" Crowd: Join a Discussion Group at aana.com

If you haven't perused the new website, you don't know what you're missing! One of the exciting new features is found in the My Community area on the members side of the website, where you can join President Malina's blog, a Clinical Hot Topics discussion group, or a discussion group for student registered nurse anesthetists. More groups will be started soon. Share your "two cents" in an AANA discussion group today!

Media Alerts: Speak Up for Your Profession

When you see "Media Alert" in the feature news box on the AANA home page at click on the link and make a beeline to the members side of the website to find out the latest reprehensible

Shadow a CRNA

Contact the GANA office
by email at
ganaoffice@bellsouth.net

comments about CRNAs in the media that need redressing. Recently, preposterous statements by an anesthesiologist in Medscape generated numerous responses from CRNAs and a supportive anesthesiologist, as well as an official response from the AANA. A Medscape editor informed President Malina that Medscape had received a high volume of responses and is looking into doing a follow-up article in a future issue. Read sample letters to Medscape, and participate in the latest alert, on the members side of the AANA website. Don't delay!

2012 AANA Election Set to Begin; Online Forum Coming Soon

The 2012 AANA Election process will begin on May 8. AANA members will receive ballot materials, including their E-signature and voting instructions, from the AANA election services coordinator. Members who requested a paper ballot will receive their materials in the mail. Candidate information, including a photograph, biographical sketch, and position statements (for Board of Directors candidates only) will be available on the AANA members side of the website. Members will be able to vote through noon CDT on June 19, 2012. Also, get your questions ready for the Online Forum for Candidates for the AANA Board of Directors, which is coming soon in a new streamlined format.

New State Government Affairs Resources

As part of our continuing effort to collect state advocacy information helpful to members and state associations, the State Government Affairs (SGA) Division has created two new web pages. There are resources addressing state regulation of office surgery and anesthesia and information about the Federal Trade Commission's increasing involvement in state healthcare policy, including FTC letters concerning CRNAs and pain management. Additional information may be added to these pages in the future, as developments warrant.

More Member Resources Available on Line

A new web page titled Promotional and Advocacy Resources for AANA Members has been added to the Professional Resources section (under AANA Business) on the members side of the AANA website. The page pulls together a variety of materials that members can use for promotional, advocacy and educational purposes. Links to current fact sheets, landmark research data, and strategy-building tools and information are included. By collecting these resources on one page with convenient links, members will save time and effort when preparing materials for promotional, advocacy,

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The Nursing Anesthesia Program at Georgia Health Sciences University

by Christine Futch, SRNA

It's an exciting and busy time of year for the nursing anesthesia students at Georgia Health Sciences University (GHSU)! We as students have much to be proud of these days! Last fall our program participated in the arduous process known as accreditation. I am proud to announce that our program received ZERO citations. It is expected that the program will receive the full ten years of accreditation! Another achievement that deserves special recognition is the completion of their doctoral education by our professors now known as Dr. Cory Peterson and Dr. Lisa Stephens. Professor Jim Masiongale and Professor Amy Masiongale are currently pursuing their doctorate degree as well. We are very proud of each of our professors!

On January 25th all of the students in the nursing anesthesia program at GHSU participated in Capitol Day. Issues addressed included the proposed changes to Georgia's professional licensure boards and the protection of the scope of practice for Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs). Recently, the entire senior class attended Mid-Year Assembly in Washington, D.C. as a requirement for graduation, and more specifically, our Professional Aspects class. Students were active participants in fifteen visits to Capitol Hill where they met with key members of the United States House of Representatives and Senate to discuss pressing issues such as Medicare cuts and reimbursement

policies, pain management services that are routinely administered by CRNAs, and Title 8 funding for the education of future nurse anesthetists. The conference was very enlightening! As a class, we'd like to recognize and thank Steve Smith for his hard work in making this year's Mid-Year Assembly the best yet!

The Class of 2013 (Junior Class) just completed their second semester of school and are looking forward to their break prior to the start of summer classes. During the semester, the students mastered the machine check and finally got into the simulation lab for hands on experience! They practiced smooth intravenous inductions and rapid sequence inductions on "Stan the Man". Care plans accompanied by an actual simulated experience in the lab were completed for fictional patients with coronary artery disease and hypertension, COPD, and morbid obesity.

The Class of 2012 (Senior Class) is currently scattered about the state and practicing anesthesia in a variety of settings. Specialty rotations in cardiothoracic, obstetrics, neurosurgical, pediatrics, regional, and burns are underway. Many of the students from the senior class attended the Valley Review in preparation for the quickly approaching certification examination. These students are also seeking out prospective jobs and submitting resumes. Less than eight months until graduation! Time flies when you're having fun! ■



The Class of GHSU 2012 at Mid-Year Assembly

Report from the Executive Director

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if they deemed it necessary. The bill passed the Senate, but never made it out of the House Health and Human Services Committee chaired by Sharon Cooper.

HB 675 was introduced by Representative Sharon Cooper. This bill amended a state law that inadvertently omitted certain trained nurses from being qualified for licensure in Georgia. This bill expanded the definition of 'approved nursing education programs'. It has been signed in to law by Governor Deal.

SB 367 was introduced by Senator Buddy Carter to grant statutory authority to the Georgia Board of Nursing to promulgate rules requiring continuing competency training as a condition for license renewal. The House and the Senate disagreed on language and a conference committee failed to report a bill.

GANA Meetings

2012 FALL MEETING: The GANA Fall meeting is scheduled for October 5 – 7, 2012, at the Hyatt Regency Savannah located at 2 W Bay St., Savannah, Georgia 3140. As usual this meeting will include a continuing education program with credits arranged by IPGE; and our GANA Annual Business Meeting and the Board elections. Please see the enclosed ad and register to attend by going to www.IPGE.com.

2013 FALL MEETING: Plans are already underway for the 2013 GANA Fall Meeting. Because 2013 will mark the 75th anniversary of GANA, we are planning on extending the meeting and adding various events that highlight the history of our organization. This meeting will be held October 4-6, 2013 at the Marriott Stone Mountain.

Scope of Practice

In response to a direct inquiry from a CRNA whether epidural steroid injections fall within the scope of practice of a CRNA, the Georgia Board of Nursing has responded as follows:

'The Board determined that it was within the scope of practice of a certified registered nurse anesthetist to perform epidural steroid injections when performed in accordance with O.C.G.A §43-26-11.1, applicable board rules and Georgia law. Additionally, it is important for a nurse to practice within the scope of his or her knowledge and training and according to the policies and guidelines of his or her facility.

It should be noted that the Board's decision and response to your inquiry should not be viewed as a comment upon or advice regarding any ongoing investigation by other professional licensing boards.' ■

Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists PAC

*I am contributing \$ _____ to further
the legislative efforts of the GANA.*

*Thank you for
your contribution
to this worthy
cause for your
profession!*

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone # _____ Best time to call _____

Email _____ Fax _____

Do you work in ☐ an office based setting? ☐ a rural hospital? ☐ a surgery center? ☐ an urban hospital?

Nurse Practitioner _____ Other (specify) _____ (Mandatory for all donations greater than \$100)

Are you interested in lobbying with the GANA during the 2012 legislative session? _____

Are you acquainted with any of Georgia's legislators? _____ If yes, who? _____

Please clip and send to: **Robbie Pope, GANA-PAC Treasurer, P.O. Box 887, Tifton, GA 31793**

Forms available at www.gana.org



AANA Mid-Year Assembly



(L to R): Leslie Jeter, Janice Izlar, Steve Smith and Martha Kral at the Hay Adams Hotel for an AANA CRNA-PAC event overlooking the White House, Washington Monument and the Jefferson Memorial.



(L to R): SRNAs Sarah Hightower, Kim Black, Jennifer Simonetti and Rachel Murchison during legislative visits on Capitol Hill.



(L to R): Keri Jones, Rose Synsmir, Brian Lindenbron, Congressman John Lewis, Steve Smith, Amy Frank and Brandon Dillard.



(L to R): Michelle Broach, Jennifer Simonetti, Kim Black, Congressman Rob Woodall, John Mestas, Sarah Hightower, Rachel Murchison and Steve Smith.

Report from the President

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I would like to close by pushing support to our GA CRNAs who are moving on to national level positions. As most know, Janice Izlar will become AANA President at our National meeting this summer. I urge you to come join us in San Francisco this year and show support for her. Past Presidents Steve Smith and Leslie Jeter are also throwing their hats into the AANA ring. Leslie is running for Region 2 Director. She has had a long list of GANA and AANA committees. I know she will do a fantastic job once elected. Steve is running for AANA Region 2 Nominating Committee. As past-president, GRC, and FPD, I know Steve will do a great job. Good luck to both of you. Thanks for supporting GA CRNAs, AND BE LOOKING FOR YOUR BALLOT. ■



(L to R): David Hardy, Allison Jester, Rose Synsmir, Congressman David Scott, Nicole Daniels, Courtney Carroll, Amy Frank and Steve Smith.

Mercer University/Medical Center of Central Georgia Nurse Anesthesia Program Update

by Sheree Wolfenden, CRNA, JD, Program Director

I am very pleased to report that all of our graduates from the class of 2011 passed the National Certification Exam on their first attempt. Also, all of the graduates are busy working as a graduate nurse anesthetist after successfully passing their exam. We are all so excited and proud of every new graduate. This most recent graduating class continues our tradition of **greater than an overall 97 per cent first-time board pass rate in our school to date**. The first class graduated in 2007 and to date we have had 5 classes graduate.

Also, last week about half of the Class of 2012 and our Associate Director, Rickey King, attended the Mid-Year Assembly in Washington, DC. They had an excellent time and came back to Macon energized and much more knowledgeable about the importance and power of nurse anesthetists' collective and individual voices being heard by Congressional Representatives at the Capital on issues germane to our profession. They also stated that the meeting was extremely informative and there was also some time to enjoy a few well known museums and monuments in Washington, DC, too.

I am also very pleased to announce that a decision about the future of this Program has been made public. The Administration of MCCG, after a contract dispute with Mercer University, has decided to collaborate with the Nurse Anesthesia Program at GHSU in Augusta, GA. The Mercer CRNA Program will close in December 2012 after the teach-out of the current cohort of CRNA students.

However, beginning in 2013, GHSU will utilize MCCG as an instrumental clinical site for their CRNA Students. We will be a major clinical site for about 10 GHSU CRNA students. These students will have no other student anesthesia provider competing for anesthesia cases in this facility. The GHSU students will receive extensive training in the following anesthesia specialties: open heart – on and off pump, major thoracic, major spine-neurological, craniotomies, major interventional vascular, OB Anesthesia, pediatrics, cases performed outside the OR, and major trauma, since this is a Level One Trauma and High Risk OB Facility. The students will also receive training in regional anesthesia and major line placements on actual patients after demonstrating proficiency in our simulation lab.

Additionally, we will retain our office and class room space for GHSU student case discussions, speakers, journal club presentations and peer review cases presented during Quality Improvement case discussions with the entire anesthesia department, too.

I believe with the addition of MCCG's outstanding reputation and clinical facility, the clinical training and experience of the GHSU Nurse Anesthesia Students will help propel this nurse anesthesia program as one of the best schools in the southeast. I look forward to helping Jim Masiongale, GHSU CRNA Program Director, as he prepares for the utilization of the clinical activities available at MCCG next year for his students. ■



Forty Georgia CRNAs and SRNAs at the 2012 AANA Mid-Year Assembly in Washington, DC.

Increasing Our PAC Fund

by Richard Douberly, CRNA



Achieving the scope of practice that CRNAs in Georgia currently have is in large part because of the support of the legislators who have taken an interest in our profession. This is ultimately because they become aware of the value that CRNAs bring to their constituents, which would remain largely misunderstood or completely unknown to them if not for our ability to bring them our message. This information is usually introduced by means of a donation and through other efforts that the PAC fund makes possible. Just as patients need access to care in order to remain healthy, GANA needs access to the legislature to maintain a healthy future for our members. This requires a sustained effort; the effectiveness of which is ultimately determined by the financial support we can generate.

The GANA PAC fund continues to remain at a very modest balance. As discussed in previous editions of this article, the GANA BOD has been reviewing a strategy that some of the other states are employing in order to maintain a more predictable and substantial balance for the PAC. The BOD has recently approved the implementation of the “opt-out model,” which will allocate a small percentage of the annual member dues to be designated for use by the PAC. A letter has been drafted that explains how the plan will take place and how it will affect each of our members. The option to participate will be optional, however, it will not increase the amount of dues paid by our members for anyone who consents to this plan. This is just a general overview of what each member will receive in all the details by letter in the near future. I hope this is encouraging, as it will enable GANA to gain a greater degree of influence and attention to the issues that are needed to secure our future scope of practice.

Even as the “opt-out plan” for the PAC takes place we will continue to in our efforts to raise money at our annual meetings in the same spirit of optimism as we have in the past. At the fall meeting in Savannah this year we plan to offer tickets for the Ghost Tour, which has been featured on various television programs such as the history channel. Hopefully this will help us increase our PAC fund and also provide everyone with an opportunity to see some of the most beautiful and interesting places in Savannah. Please remember that we very much appreciate your support in all these efforts and also that we continue to encourage you make your contributions to the PAC through the GANA website. ■

Georgia CRNAs in Action



(L to R): Maegan Brass, Governor Nathan Deal, James Masiengale and Steve Smith during Capitol Day.



(L to R): Students Michelle Broach and Keri Jones during legislative visits on Capitol Hill.



Lunchtime on Capitol Hill

Update from the AANA

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or educational uses. New resources will be added as they become available.

Prevent Surgical Fires

As part of its collaboration with the Preventing Surgical Fires Initiative of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the AANA has developed a surgical fire resource webpage. Access surgical fire prevention recommendations and resource materials in professional practice on the website.

Pass Drug Shortage Notification Bills, AANA Urges Congress

Directing pharmaceutical manufacturers to publicly notify the FDA of conditions that would lead to drug shortages would help alleviate the problem of drug shortages themselves, the AANA wrote sponsors of legislation on the topic Feb. 16. The Preserving Access to Life-Saving Medications Act of 2011 (S 296/HR 2245) suggests that Congress may be waking up to the need for and benefits of such legislation, motivated by periodic threats of delayed and canceled surgeries and of outages of crucial cancer treatment medications.

Medical Product Shortages

The AANA submitted a letter to the FDA in response to a recently released FDA report titled A Review of FDA's Approach to Medical Product Shortages. The AANA letter detailed recommendations, consistent with the FDA's report, for an action plan to effectively address the drug shortage crisis.

NOTEWORTHY

Support LifeBox to Make Surgery Safer Around the Globe

Lifebox is a not-for-profit organization that grew out of a global initiative by the World Health Organization (WHO) to make surgery safer around the globe. Since nurse anesthesia is all about patient safety, the AANA has adopted the cause of this valuable organization and is asking nurse anesthetists in the United States to consider making a donation to support the work of Lifebox. Specifically, the Lifebox mission is "to ensure that no patient dies because a pulse oximeter and basic safety checks were not used during surgery." This project is a straightforward first step: Ensuring that every operating room in the world has a simple, essential device that can save lives – a pulse oximeter. For every \$250 in donations, the program provides a pulse oximeter, rechargeable batteries, universal finger probe, AC/DC adapter charger and cradle, protective case, educational materials and a copy of the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist to eligible clinicians/facilities in low income/low resource areas. A link to Lifebox has been provided on the AANA website. Donations in any amount will be greatly appreciated!

50-State Service Strategy Update

You can go to the website to view a summary of the actions taken in response to the main themes identified from the membership feedback received during the 50-State Service Strategy sessions held at the November 2011 Fall Leadership

Academy. This information includes the development of an electronic catalogue of templates for state association leaders, the appointment of a workgroup to define the current and future roles and responsibilities of the Region Directors, the expansion of AANA boot camps, and the increased use of technology to manage the needs identified by members in the areas of communication, membership and data.

March 1 Medicare Cuts Averted for More Cuts January 1, 2013

Following receipt of more than 5,000 CRNAdvocacy messages from AANA members to Capitol Hill, Congress approved legislation (HR 3630) which averted 26.2 percent in Medicare Part B payment cuts for CRNAs and physicians that would have hit on March 1. The AANA and CRNAs had urged Congress to enact the longest possible relief package; however, the measure only provides relief from possible cuts until January 1, 2013, when cuts in excess of 30 percent will take affect. This will drive Congress to take up additional relief legislation in a year-end "lame duck" session following the Nov. 6 elections.

AANA Response to NY Times Editorial: Reject 17 Percent Cuts to Anesthesia Care

A Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) proposal to cut Medicare anesthesia and specialty care 17 percent over three years should be rejected by Congress and replaced by initiatives to make more efficient use of CRNAs and other advanced practice registered nurses, wrote AANA President Debra Malina, CRNA, DNSc, MBA, in response to a Feb. 22 editorial in the New York Times.

Senate Pain Hearing Reviews IOM Report

The impact of pain in the United States deserves more attention, a Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee found during a hearing on Feb. 14. The AANA distributed a written statement at the hearing. Chaired by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA), the committee took testimony from the National Institutes of Health, the co-chairs of the 2011 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report panel on "Relieving Pain," and representatives of organizations of patients suffering from chronic pain. According to the IOM, there are 116 million Americans suffering from chronic, intractable pain at an economic and healthcare cost approaching two-thirds of a trillion dollars per year.

HHS Issues More Essential Health Benefits Guidance

On Feb. 17, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued additional guidance and "frequently asked questions" (FAQs) regarding "essential health benefits," a critical health reform implementation term governing the development and marketing of health plans in states, and important to CRNAs. Under the agency's intended approach, states would have the flexibility to select an existing health plan to set the "benchmark" for the items and services included in its essential health benefits package. The AANA sent comments to the HHS on this bulletin requesting that the proposed essential health benefits rule should include anesthesia services among the 10 categories of essential services in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), as anesthesia and analgesia care provided by CRNAs fits into many of the essential health benefits requirements in the ACA.

(continued on page 13)

Mercer University/Medical Center of Central Georgia Nurse Anesthesia Program

Brandi Justice, SRNA

What an exciting and challenging year we have had, and our excitement is growing as we enter into our last 2 semesters prior to graduation in December. We have accomplished a great deal over the past 12 months including attending full time clinicals with outside rotations, completing challenging didactic courses, performing community service projects, and preparing for our upcoming boards. It has no doubt been a challenging time for everyone, but it is an awesome feeling to see how far we have come and how much we have grown in our roles as future CRNAs. Our class has become a team unit working together to become a strong support group for one another during trying school times as well as during difficulty family situations that some have faced over the past year. I know we are all very grateful for one another and the support that we have provided each other.

A highlight for many of us over the past year was being afforded the opportunity in April to attend the AANA Mid Year Assembly in Washington, DC. Eight of our 18 students chose to attend the meeting, and it was an amazing and educational experience. Recognizing the importance of being involved in our national organization (and state organizations!) and the impact our presence can be with our legislators was an invaluable experience. I look forward to attending Mid Year Assembly in the future as a CRNA.

With only 7 months to go until graduation, I know I speak for our class when I say we are excited and ready to complete this journey, but we know we still have so much more to learn. I have no doubt that we will continue to be stressed and tired, but I also have no doubt that we will all continue to strive to be the best that we can be. ■



Shawna O'Neil, Brandi Justice, Keri Jones, Tina Powers, Jayma Perry, Brenda Davis, Nicole Kennedy, Michelle Broach and Assistant Program Director, Rickey King

2012 GANA Calendar

GANA Board Meetings:

August 25, 2012 At GHSU in Augusta

Other Meetings and Events:

August 4-8, 2012 AANA Annual Meeting in
San Francisco, CA

October 5-7, 2012 GANA Annual
Fall Meeting
Hyatt Regency
Savannah, GA

Proposed Calendar for the To & Fro:
August 2012

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2012 GANA Annual Fall Meeting in Savannah, Georgia!

**October 5-7, 2012
at the Hyatt Regency**



Nominations for the 2012 Rosalie McDonald Award Now Being Accepted

GANA is seeking nominations for a CRNA to receive the 2012 Rosalie McDonald Award. Please nominate a worthy CRNA for this prestigious award. All nominations must be submitted by August 10th to the GANA office. Nominations should be prepared in narrative format and submitted by mail, fax or email to:

GANA, 1832 Highway 54 W.
Fayetteville, GA 30214;
or facsimile: 770.632.1625;
or email: ganaoffice@bellsouth.net.

Rosalie McDonald spearheaded the GANA in 1938. She was the first GANA President and the 6th AANA President. Be proud of your profession. Honor a fellow CRNA by nominating him or her for their contribution to our profession. The honoree will be presented with the award at the GANA Annual Meeting this year in Savannah at the Hyatt Regency on October 5.



☒ **Yes!**

I want to be actively involved in the GANA!

Name: _____

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Address: _____

Home Tel: _____ Work Tel: _____

Interests – Check all that apply:

Committees:

☐ Bylaws ☐ Communications ☐ GRC ☐ Public Relations

☐ Obtain a seat on the Board of Directors

I'd like to become a legislative contact for my legislative district:

☐ State ☐ Federal

☐ I can participate in GANA Lobby Day

☐ I will participate in any area needed

☐ Other: _____

Please clip and return to:

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Update from the AANA

(continued from page 10)

HHS Delaying Implementation of ICD-10 Compliance

The HHS is delaying implementation of transitions and compliance to a new clinical diagnosis code set called ICD-10 past its original Oct. 1, 2013, “go” date, the agency said in a statement Feb. 17.

AANA Urges AMA Panel to Delay Decision Making on GI Sedation

An American Medical Association (AMA) panel considering changes to the relative value of gastrointestinal procedures is wise to consider alternatives to the current flawed system that allows some double-payment for sedation, but should delay decision making on the issue until the AANA and CRNAs have the opportunity to further review the proposals, AANA President Debra Malina, CRNA, DNSc, MBA wrote to the AMA on Jan. 27. The AANA had been excluded by the AMA’s physician-centric process.

Do You Care to be Counted?

To continue strengthening CRNAs’ voice in Washington during this major election year, the CRNA-PAC has kicked off its 2012 Care to be Counted campaign with the release of a new video that underscores the importance of every AANA members’ contribution. To view the video, learn more, or contribute to the CRNA-PAC, click www.caretobecounted.org and enter your AANA member login and password.

AANA Foundation Supports Nurses’ Health Study: 100,000 Nurses Needed

Harvard researchers are recruiting 100,000 female nurses and nursing students for Nurses’ Health Study 3 (NHS3). In the past 35 years, more than 230,000 NHS participants have changed what we know about women’s health. NHS3 is the next generation! If you’re a female RN, LPN or nursing student, 20-46 years old, in the United States or Canada, you can contribute to groundbreaking research on lifestyle, environment, nurses’ work life, and women’s health. Visit www.NHS3.org to complete a 30-minute online survey about lifestyle and health and to join the next generation of the world’s largest, longest-running study of women’s health. If you know other eligible nurses, click on the “Email-a-Nurse” to send them a message.

AANA/Hamline Launch Pain Management Program

The Advanced Pain Management program, a joint undertaking of the AANA and Hamline University, was launched in February with a full cohort of 10 students. This four-semester, post-master’s program of study prepares individuals as pain management professionals and uses nationally recognized experts who practice what they teach.

COA Welcomes Your Feedback

The Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs’ (COA) newly redesigned website now offers communities of interest the opportunity to provide comments, questions, and concerns by visiting <http://home.coa.us.com> and clicking on “Contact Us.” Individuals must provide contact information so the accreditation staff can follow up on their comments. Individuals with questions or concerns related to nurse anesthesia programs can provide this information by clicking on the “Concerns” link in the Contact Us section of the website. Let your voice be heard: Visit the COA website and provide us with your feedback! ■

Please “Like Us” on Facebook!

I would like to encourage all of our membership to go to www.gana.org and click on Facebook in the upper right hand corner of the homepage and then “like us” on Facebook. This will allow you to receive the most up to date information pertinent to your practice from multiple nurse anesthesia sites on the web. Be sure and check out the album of pictures from our recent trip to the AANA Mid-Year Assembly meeting in Washington, DC that took place on April 15-18, 2012. While on the GANA website please take time to browse the site and sign up for the members-side only for information we are unable to post on the public side. This will also allow you to vote in the GANA elections electronically later on in the summer. Lastly, if you have not yet visited the “new” AANA site, www.aana.com, please do. It is an improved site with a new wealth of information contained in it. Also, be sure and sign up on its members-only site which will allow you to vote in the upcoming AANA elections starting on May 8th. Let’s all participate in this year’s voting and make it a record year for Georgia voter turn-out.

Remember to support your fellow Georgians on the ballot, Leslie Jeter for Region 2 Director and Stephen D. Smith for Region 2 Nominations Committee. The AANA Board of Directors are elected by you and as such make all of the decisions that affect you. You can only have an influence in this process if you vote!

Steve Smith CRNA, MA
GANA Communications Chair



Georgia Health Sciences University's Nurse Anesthesia Program Report

by James Masiongale, CRNA, MHS
Director and Clinical Coordinator

Change continues to be the norm for Georgia Health Sciences University. You may or may not be aware that GHSU (formerly MCG) is in the beginning phase of combining with Augusta State University to form a large university that features liberal arts and healthcare education. The new university name has yet to be determined, but we have been told that it will not contain the word 'health' in the name. So those of you that have trouble remembering Georgia Health Sciences University should not despair, that name is going away.

The nursing anesthesia program is in the process of undergoing change as well. You probably received information from GANA on the collaboration between GHSU's nurse anesthesia program and the Medical Center of Central Georgia (MCCG). We along with 2 other anesthesia programs from other states submitted proposals as to how best keep MCCG as a training facility for CRNA students. We are delighted that MCCG chose our proposal. Starting in the fall of 2013 we will accept a total of 30 students. This number is down from the 38 students total that both programs now accept combined. All didactic will be conducted in Augusta during the 1st year as it is currently done and a cohort of 10 students will conduct the majority of their clinical training at MCCG with occasional out rotations to ensure they meet the Council on Accreditation's clinical requirements. The collaboration was also a win for those CRNA's that feel the programs are turning out to many CRNA students. The overall number of graduates per year will be decreased by a total of 8 through this agreement. There will also be a two-year period of time where only 20 students will graduate as the students move forward in the curriculum.

The students have been just as busy. In addition to the rigors of clinical and didactic instruction, all 40 GHSU students, Mercer students, and several Georgia CRNAs participated in the Capital Day events on January 25, 2012, as part of National Nurse Anesthetist Week. This event has continued to grow over the last few years and is a wonderful mechanism for educating legislators on the importance of CRNAs to the state of Georgia. Myself, eight senior students, four students from Mercer, Steve Smith, GANA Federal Political Director and Christy Dunkelberger, GANA Executive Director and Legal Counsel, represented GANA at the annual Rural Health Day at the Capitol on February 16, 2012. And finally, the entire senior class has just returned from Washington, DC after attending the AANA Mid-Year Assembly April 14th to 18th. Please refer to Steve Smith's FPD report for the details of MYA. ■



GANA President Brent DuBois and his son Seth with Congressman Austin Scott ... what a great dad!



Brenda Davis, Steve Smith, Christine Futch, Rose Synsmir, Kaydee Newberry, Congressman Sanford Bishop, Nicole Kennedy, Tina Powers, Keri Jones, Michelle Broach and Jayma Perry.



Steve Smith, Chris Scott (student from Villanova), AANA President-Elect Janice Izlar, Leslie Jeter and Kim Graves (student from Union University in Tennessee) in attendance at the Student Mentorship Program reception at the AANA MYA in Washington, DC.



Exhibiting at Georgia Rural Health Day at the Capitol were SRNAs Nicole Daniels, Brandi Justice, Christine Futch, Jake Whitaker, Tina Powers, Jayma Perry, Jon Griggs, Rachel Murchison, Palmer Hummel, GHSU Professor Jim Masiongale and SRNA Rebecca Barger.

2012 Legislative Events

by Daniel Dell, CRNA, MSN



Greetings! The start of 2012 has been as predicted! We have been very busy during the legislative session. The GANA has been very busy fighting on the front line to protect your practice rights and maintain your scope of practice.

First, Capitol Day was a huge success! We had one of the best turnouts in recent years! There are great pictures of this event on the GANA website. Please make plans to attend next year if possible.

One of the issues the GANA worked on was the legislation proposed by Secretary of State, Brian Kemp to reorganize the professional licensing boards, including the Georgia Board of Nursing. This legislation created a consumer board that would take over many responsibilities of the current licensing boards. The GANA executive director, along with the elected officers and board members met with Secretary Kemp to discuss this legislation and to voice our concerns. Many other professional disciplines also voiced concerns and opposition. Ultimately, Secretary Kemp withdrew SB 445 from consideration for this year.

Mid-Year Assembly in Washington, D.C. was a huge success. More than 800 CRNA's and SRNA's (40 of which are from Georgia)

descended upon our nation's Capital to discuss important issues that impact CRNA's and the states that they practice. The GANA along with GHSU and Mercer University students met with Georgia's Senators and Congressmen to discuss Medicare B cuts, Graduate education funding, Pain management legislation, and critical drug shortages. It was a great day and I feel that we got our message out loud and clear. Now we must see what the Supreme Court Rules on the Affordable Care Act.

Nurse Anesthetists in the state of Georgia, please be proactive in protecting your practice rights and ability to earn a living. These issues are more than "politics." Your board members and elected officials work hard on your behalf, but we cannot do it alone. It takes your voice as a constituent to make a difference. You may not realize it but, there are forces attacking your scope of practice/ practice rights constantly. If we stand by we will give away our ability to practice to the fullest extent of our education. Please become active in your professional future and get involved in the GANA. Email any of us at the addresses provided in the *To & Fro* and we will direct you.

Thank you! ■

Vote for

LESLIE JETER
AANA Region 2 Director



AANA Experience:

- AANA Meetings Task Force, appointed FY 2009
- Nominations Committee (Chair), elected FY 2009
- Nominations Committee, elected FY 2006
- Program Committee (Chair), appointed FY 2006 and 2007
- Program Committee, appointed FY 2004, 2010 and 2011
- AANA Foundation Scholarship Committee, FY 2009 and 2010
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