



To & Fro

A Publication of the Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists • Volume 71 • Winter 2013

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists CRNAs

- Represent nearly 150 years of quality anesthesia
- Safely administer approximately 33 million anesthetics in the US every year
- Represented by 45,000 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

GANA: Prestigious Past, Promising Future

by James Masingale, CRNA, MHS



In the days prior to assuming the role as your GANA President at the fall meeting in Savannah, fear and doubt began rearing their ugly heads. I began to reflect on all the fabulous people that have held this position before me, including the current AANA President, and I questioned if I possessed the leadership skills, knowledge and merits necessary to effectively perform the duties of the position. As the business meeting grew nearer, my hands began to sweat and I felt a nervousness that I had not experienced in quite some time. When out-going President Brent DuBois introduced me as the newly elected president, I was unsure that when I attempted to speak words would actually come out of my mouth. I walked to the podium, glanced out at the guests, students, and CRNAs (many of whom had experienced this very ordeal, and some twice) and a sudden calmness overcame me. It was at that moment I realized there was nothing to fear. Thanks to the efforts of many great CRNAs and the best Executive Director any organization could ever ask for, a solid foundation has been laid for many years; and with a solid foundation, the sky is the limit to how much you can do. However, a foundation can weaken over time if due diligence is not provided. I wish to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to work with such an outstanding group of board members this year to ensure the foundation remains solid and the needs of the membership are fulfilled.

The first step in assuring everyone was on the same tract was attending a one day retreat in Atlanta. Les Wallace, Ph.D. founder of Signature Resources and designer of the Nine Minute Mentor was this year's guest facilitator. Dr. Wallace speaks to over 20,000 individuals annually on issues of organizational transformation and leadership, strategic thinking, and board of directors' development and governance and has spoken and worked with the AANA numerous times. Many items were covered during this retreat including assessing what GANA has done well in the past and critiquing areas that could be improved. The focus was on moving forward and building on past success.

I asked Dr. Wallace to conduct the retreat because he has no problem telling you if you have in the past done something or currently doing something you probably should not be doing, or there are things you could do better. As he puts it in his lectures, "I have no problem telling you your baby is ugly". I knew GANA's "baby" was not ugly, but I wanted to know how pretty it was and how we can make it prettier. After the retreat and Dr. Wallace's assessment, he agreed GANA has a pretty baby; in fact if all the state associations held a baby contest, we would place near the top and possibly win. All metaphors aside, what the board learned at this retreat is that the foundation, or the way we do things is really good – for the most part. As CRNAs we all know there is always room for improvement and with the help of the retreat

(continued on back)

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www.gana.org

*Report from the Executive Director***From the Executive Director**

by Christy A. Dunkelberger, Esq.



Happy New Year! Make your resolution to become active in GANA!

2013 GANA Capitol Day

Plan to attend the 2013 GANA Capitol Day at the Georgia State Capitol on February 5, 2013. GANA Capitol Day provides you an opportunity to meet and mingle with your representatives and discuss the issues that are important to CRNAs. One of the GANA legislative goals is to be more recognizable to the legislators. Come out and join us for Capitol Day and make "CRNA" and "GANA" easily recognized by the Georgia legislators.

Non Deductibility of Dues for 2012

As required by section 6033(e) of the Internal Revenue Code, GANA is required to inform you of the amount of your state membership dues that is allocated towards the expenses incurred by for state lobbying efforts. For those of you who opted out of contributing a portion of your GANA dues money to the GANA-PAC, the amount of your state membership dues that is allocated towards the expenses incurred by for state lobbying efforts is \$34.00. For those of you who did not opt out of contributing a portion of your GANA dues money to the GANA-PAC the amount of your state membership dues that is allocated towards the expenses incurred by for state lobbying efforts is \$45.62. These amounts are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. All GANA members are also members of the AANA. The AANA will provide correspondence in the AANA President's letter about the amount incurred for lobbying activities from the national dues. GANA receives \$232.50 from the AANA for each full dues paying member.

Legislative and Regulatory Issues

The Georgia Legislature convened at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, January 14, 2013.

Several Bills of interest have been pre-filed and talk that other Bills of interest are in the pipeline. Senator Buddy Carter pre-filed two Bills affecting nurses. SB 10 requires nurse to maintain continuing competencies through several options, including continuing education credits, certification, as well as others, in order to obtain licensure renewal. If passed, SB 10 will take effect in 2016. SB 13 calls for mandatory reporting by nurses and facilities in the event of violations of certain crimes, including drug and alcohol use and abuse.

Pain Management

Pain management services continue to be a hot topic of discussion. "Illegal "pill mill" activities continue to provide fodder and stimulate efforts to implement new laws and standards for the administration of any and all pain management services. The Georgia Attorney General has promised that the legislature will pass a bill this session for the control of pain management services. The GCMB has already published and adopted Rules that authorize the GCMB to take action against licensees for unprofessional conduct related to pain management. The Rules set minimum standards for prescribing controlled substances for treatment of pain and chronic pain. On the legislative side, one of the top priorities of certain legislators for the upcoming legislative session is to adopt legislation that establishes controls on prescribing and dispensing certain controlled substances. Similar legislation was introduced last session, but failed to pass. If you provide pain management services,

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Fall Assembly Leadership Academy

by Mark Schmitz, CRNA

On November 16-18 I attended the Fall Assembly Leadership Academy in Colorado Springs, CO, sponsored by the AANA. The purpose of the Leadership Academy is to provide attendees the knowledge and skills necessary to more fully participate in all leadership roles in their local organizations, as well as the state or national level.

Some of the sessions were pertaining to team dynamics and why certain people with particular characteristics should be in certain positions in those organizations. These sessions also addressed the notion that people with certain characteristics should not be in certain positions in an organization.

Other seminars presented techniques for more effective meeting strategies that are now being used by GANA to streamline meetings and making time use more efficient. This is why GANA BOD meetings are not as long as once seen in the past. Come to them and find out for yourself. The next meeting is in March. Check the web site www.gana.org for more details.

The Leadership Academy also discussed leaders of the state association's responsibility toward the financial stewardship regarding their organization's budget.

The Leadership Academy is a good meeting not only for the state leaders but all AANA members. The meeting also presented techniques for dealing with difficult work situations. It is another facet of the recurring phrase, "Know your worth." In today's work environment, it isn't enough to just provide safe anesthesia. You will be reminded on more than one occasion what you "cost" your employer. In today's market, you will have to be able to defend the cost of providing quality care that you deliver. If you cannot provide evidence that you are a positive revenue source for the people you work with, your hour glass may soon be running out of sand. This applies to CRNAs in all work situations.

In closing, Capital Day will be in February. Again check the GANA website for the date or call the GANA office and get involved. I thank you for allowing me to represent you on the GANA Board. ■

From the Executive Director

(continued from page 2)

I urge you to watch for any proposed legislation and talk with your legislators. Please help us ensure that CRNA practice is not restricted.

GCMB – The Georgia Composite Medical Board has published proposed rules related to telemedicine. After two meetings on this issue, the rules have not yet been adopted. Nursing professional groups as well as public interest groups voiced opposition to the restrictive language of the proposed rule. The proposed language includes the requirement that a physician must see the patient in person or provide an initial consultation by way of electronic means before an APRN can provide care to a patient electronically. This requirement restricts the scope of practice of APRNs. There is no other situation under Georgia law whereby an APRN cannot provide care to a patient until the physician has seen the patient.

GANA Meetings

GANA Board Meeting – The next GANA Board Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 9, 2013, at the GANA office in Fayetteville. If you want to observe your Board of Directors at work, plan to attend this meeting. Please RSVP if you are interested in attending to ensure we have an accurate head count and to offer you reading materials and directions.

2013 GANA 75th Anniversary Fall Meeting – The 2013 Annual Fall Meeting will mark the 75th anniversary of your organization, the Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists. This marks an historic milestone for GANA. The anniversary celebration will be held October 4-6, 2013, at the Evergreen Marriott Conference Resort in Stone Mountain, Georgia. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this historic event. The GANA Archives Committee promises that this 75th meeting will be a memorable and extraordinary event. Visit www.IPGE.com for more details. ■



Go to www.gana.org, click on Facebook in the upper right hand corner of the home page and then "Like Us" on Facebook!

Steve Smith Receives the 2012 GANA Rosalie McDonald Award

by Leslie Jeter, CRNA, MS

The 2012 GANA Rosalie McDonald Award was presented to Steve Smith during the GANA's Annual Business Meeting in Savannah. As evinced by his accomplishments, Steve is very deserving of this award.

Steve has been involved with the GANA for the past six years. He has served in a variety of offices including Director, President-Elect, and President in 2008. On the committee level, Steve has chaired the Government Relations Committee and has served for several years as Chair of Communications, which includes editing the To and Fro and managing the GANA web site.



Steve Smith, winner of the 2012 Rosalie McDonald Award for Excellence in Anesthesia

Steve has served as the GANA's Federal Political Director since 2010. In 2012, he was elected to the AANA's Resolutions Committee. He currently serves on the AANA's Government Relations Committee. Steve has also been active for many years with the Coalition of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses of Georgia.

Steve has been a faithful and careful steward of CRNA practice in Georgia. The assurance of his practiced hand and logical mind has served as solace for many a GANA President who has followed in his footsteps. Steve's sustained and selfless contribution to the practice of nurse anesthesia embodies the true spirit of Rosalie McDonald, GANA founder and nurse anesthesia pioneer. ■



Rose Synsmir, Michele Womble, Katie Truitt and Traci Bryan at the 2012 GANA Retreat

News from Mercer/MCCG Nurse Anesthesia Program

by Sheree Wolfenden, JD, CRNA
Interim Clinical Coordinator

The Mercer/MCCG Nurse Anesthesia Program graduated its last class in Dec. 2012. There were 18 graduates. The program closure was expected, but very sad news for so many past graduates and program faculty. The graduates are busy studying for their CRNA Boards and completing employment paperwork for their first jobs as CRNAs. All students have accepted job offers in Georgia and out-of-state. To date about 11 out of 18 students have taken the NCE and passed.

The Mercer/MCCG Program may have closed its doors as a school, but it is now affiliated with Georgia Regents University, formally MCG, in Augusta. MCCG will become a major clinical site for the students' open heart, OB and under 2 years of age pediatric case requirements.

We are currently training 5 seniors for 8 week rotations-- working towards 10 students who will eventually perform their clinical at MCCG for 1 year. MCCG will eventually become a major clinical site for Georgia Regents University CRNA Program, accepting 10 students from a total class size of 30 students. The first group of 5 students from Augusta has been in clinical for 2 weeks and they have all demonstrated excellent didactic and clinical skills in their cases. Also, the the students' enthusiasm and desire to learn clinical anesthesia is exceptional.



GRU Program Director and GANA President Jim Masiongale with former student Chad Williams, CRNA, and GRU Professor Amy Masiongale at the 2012 GANA Annual Fall Meeting

Georgia Health Science University Nursing Anesthesia Program

by Malorie Brewer, SRNA



The past few months have brought some exciting changes to Georgia Health Science University's nursing anesthesia program. First of all, congratulations to the class of 2012! All twenty senior students successfully completed program requirements, and a graduation ceremony was held at Warren Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia, on December 14th, 2012. The new graduates are now vigorously studying for boards and anxiously awaiting their authorizations to test. Please keep them in your thoughts and encourage them as they embark on their final step in becoming CRNAs.

At the graduation ceremony, several students were recognized for outstanding achievements. Congratulations to Jennifer Simonetti, this year's deserving recipient of the Most Outstanding Student Award. New graduate Christine Futch and incoming senior student Malorie Brewer were awarded this year's GANA Student Scholarships, and both are extremely appreciative of the financial assistance.

The junior SRNAs completed their first semester of the program in December, and have greatly enjoyed a month-long holiday break before hitting the books again. This semester, they have a rigorous schedule including Pharmacology II, Advanced Principles of Anesthesia, Technology and

Techniques of Anesthesia, and Pathophysiology. The students will learn how to perform general and rapid sequence inductions on "Stan," our beloved simulation lab patient.

The Class of 2013 just completed their first semester of clinical anesthesia and began their first "Senior" rotations on January 7. Our new clinical site in Macon is opening for GHSU students this semester, and five senior students will rotate at a time. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to travel to a site that offers general anesthesia along with specialty cases including neuro and hearts.

After collaborating with the Medical Center of Central Georgia in Macon, GHSU's anesthesia program is now capable of expanding the number of students in each class. Interviews for the Class of 2015 were conducted in December, and 30 students were offered admission, increasing from 20 students accepted in previous classes. All 30 of these students will complete the didactic portion of the program in Augusta at our main campus. Then, 10 students will be placed primarily in Macon for the clinical portion while the other 20 will travel to our existing clinical sites throughout the state. We are very excited to expand our program and increase the population of CRNAs in Georgia! ■



Yes!

I want to be actively involved in the GANA!

Name: _____

Email: _____

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

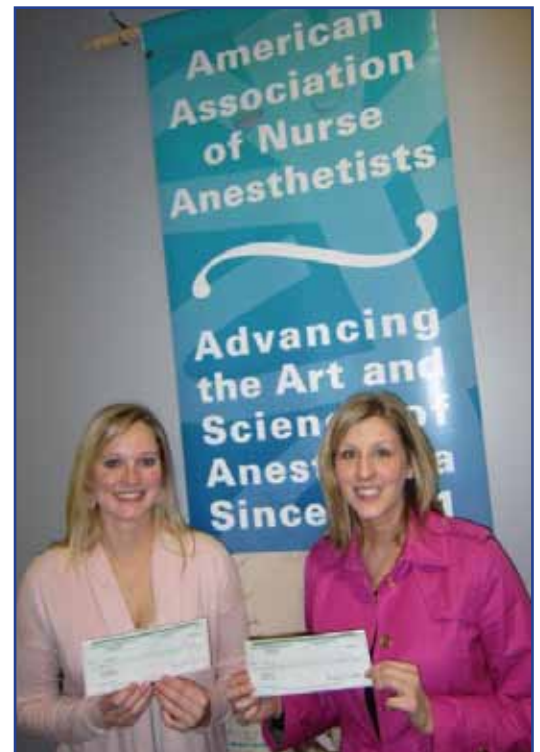
☐ I can participate in GANA Lobby Day

☐ I will participate in any area needed

☐ Other: _____

Please clip and return to:

GANA, 1832 Hwy. 54 West • Fayetteville, GA 30214



GHSU students Malorie Brewer (left) and Christine Futch (right), recipients of this year's GANA scholarships

A Busy Year in 2013

by Daniel Dell, CRNA, MSN



Greetings! I hope that you and your family have a happy new year! 2013 promises to be a busy year for CRNAs across Georgia. New Year's Eve has come and gone, but the fireworks will still be in the air until this legislative session is completed. We as an organization will keep a vigilant eye on legislative items that will affect CRNA practice rights. We need you as a member of GANA to help us protect our practice. There are several ways to accomplish that task:

1. Donate to the PAC fund
2. Contact your legislator(s) when issues present themselves
3. Join the GANA at events such as Capitol Day

Capitol Day is a little later in the year in 2013. This year's event will be February 5th, 2013 in room 230 at the Capitol in Atlanta, GA. There will be a drop-in breakfast so feel free

to come by and join us as we bring our message to the legislators. Please contact your representative and encourage them to drop in.

Please be involved in 2013. Let us know how we can better serve you in 2013. Stay tuned in for key legislative items ... we will! ■

Need Malpractice Insurance?

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

Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists PAC

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

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 2013 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

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



Medicare Access to Pain Care Rule Takes Effect

by Steve Smith, CRNA, MA



I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and Happy New Year to all of you. As I am sure you are all aware of by now the Medicare Access to Pain Care Rule took effect January 1, 2013 and Medicare Part B cuts of 27% to CRNA and physician services were averted until January 1, 2014. As we start the New Year and the 113th Congress I wanted to pass on to you key information for the upcoming year. Georgia now has 14 members of the US House of Representatives as a result of the 2010 census and newly created 14th district. Congressman Doug Collins (R) was elected to the 9th district previously held by Congressman Tom Graves (R). Tom Graves ran and was elected to the new 14th district. If you currently are not sure who your state and federal legislators are please visit the following website, www.votesmart.org. The following House and Senate members will be serving on key AANA Committees during the 113th Congress, Representatives Jack Kingston (1), Sanford Bishop (2), John Lewis (5), Tom Price (6), Phil Gingrey (11) John Barrow (12) and Senator Johnny Isakson. The committees that have relevance to the AANA are the HHS, Ways and Means, Appropriations and the Energy and Commerce committee. Now is a great time to reach out to these legislators and introduce yourself and let them know who you are.

The Medicare agency issued its final ruling on Medicare coverage of chronic pain management services by CRNAs on November 1, 2012, which as I previously mentioned went into effect on January 1, 2013. This was a major victory for our patients and our profession. The highlights of the agency ruling included expansion of Medicare coverage of services within a CRNA's scope of practice in states where they are legally authorized to perform these services, which includes Georgia. I would like to thank all of you that submitted comments through the "Protect My Pain Care Campaign" and especially to those who personally contacted their legislators. We did it!

With regards to the Medicare Part B cuts to CRNAs being averted, there was also an increase in the conversion factor (cf), up 1.7% over 2012 levels. That means for Georgia that the conversion factor in Atlanta will be 21.5, and 21.06 in the rest of Georgia. Unfortunately, come March 1, 2013 there will very likely be a 2% reduction (\$11.1 billion) in Medicare

due to a "budget sequestration". See your AANA Hotline from January 7, 2013 for further explanation.

I would like to remind all of you of the importance of responding to the AANA E-Alerts, and staying current with the AANA E-ssentials and Hotline that are delivered to you by email. If you are not receiving them please contact the AANA and let them know, 847-692-7050. These are your primary resources for staying abreast of what is happening on the political front that can affect your practice. Another way to stay up-to-date on federal and state events is to go to www.gana.org. First, visit the "Advocacy" link for general information and then on Facebook in the upper right hand corner of the homepage, "Like Us". You will start receiving information to keep you up to date on the current events affecting or that are of interest to Georgia CRNAs.

It's not too early to start planning for the 2013 AANA Mid-Year Assembly in Washington, DC on April 14-17. Each year during this meeting over the last several years there have been around 30 of us from Georgia to embark on Capitol Hill to advocate for our Georgia CRNAs. Plan now to be one of the special ones this year to participate in this great event. As always, don't forget to give generously to your CRNA-PAC at www.caretobecounted.org. Of importance, the CRNA-PAC fund is non-partisan and supports those legislators that support the AANA as a preeminent healthcare association for anesthesia care and safety. In closing, do not hesitate to contact me with any of your questions or concerns about federal government affairs. Thank you so much for allowing me to begin my 4th year as your Federal Political Director. ■

Shadow a CRNA

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

2012 Fall Meeting in Savannah, Georgia



Barbara Waldron, Janice Izlar and Martha Kral at the GANA Health and Wellness exhibit



Bertha Onyemaobi, Cynthia Moore and Carmen Simmons



Lacey Staten, Whitney Huffman and Kellie Tinley (sitting) and Emily Dollar (standing)



12 GANA Past Presidents and the current President: Mark Schwartz, Janice Izlar, Leslie Jeter, Jim Masiongale, Mary Flister, Sharon Twibell, Steve Smith, Ann Thompson, Brent DuBois, Barb Waldron, Martha Kral, Kay Argroves and Rose Synsmir



Ann Thompson, Exhibitor John White, Rose Synsmir, Zac Barr, Sheree Wolfenden and Hyacinth Spence



2012-2013 GANA President Jim Masiongale and Immediate Past President Brent DuBois



Martha Kral and Rose Synsmir at the Wellness Table



Sister John Moravec and GANA ED and Legal Counsel Christy Dunkelberger



Director Traci Bryan and AANA President Janice Izlar

Georgia CRNAs in Action

AANA Fall Assembly Leadership Academy Colorado Springs, CO

*Representing Georgia at the AANA Fall Assembly Leadership Academy in Colorado Springs were Daniel Dell, Mark Schmitz, Rose Synsmir, Jim Masiongale, Leslie Jeter, Amy Masiongale, Steve Smith;
Not pictured: AANA President Janice Izlar*



Joint Committee Conference in Chicago, IL



The GANA was well represented at the recent Joint Committee Conference in Chicago by Rose Synsmir (Program Committee), Leslie Jeter (Programs Chair), AANA President Janice Izlar, Kay Argroves (Practice Committee) and Steve Smith (Government Relations Committee)

2012 GANA Leadership Retreat in Atlanta, GA

Bottom row: President Jim Masiongale, ED/Legal Counsel Christy Dunkelberger, and guest speaker, Les Wallace from Signature Resources; Top row: FPD Steve Smith, Director Michele Womble, Past President Leslie Jeter, Treasurer Dewey Galeas, Director Jo Sineath, Secretary Katie Truitt, Past President Rose Synsmir and Director Traci Bryan



A Message from Our Lobbyist

by Monty Veazey

The 2013 Session opened on January 14th to start what shall be a 40-day session. In many respects, The General Assembly will look the same with Governor Deal, Lt. Governor Casey Cagle and House Speaker David Ralston serving as the leadership. The Georgia House of Representatives increased the number of Republicans as well as the State Senate where they now have a super majority. The Senate has the most significant change with a new President Pro Tem Senator David Shafer, Majority Leader and Senator Ronnie Chance and many new Committee Chairs. In addition, the balance of power has gone back to the Lt. Governor.

Like years past, the most significant and pressing issue will be the state budget. While revenue has increased it is not to the level to prevent cuts. Unlike the Federal Budget, Georgia's budget must be balanced. From the Affordable Care Act to a sluggish economy, the budget will be a challenge.

The only tax increase will come from continuing the Hospital Bed Tax. The Medicaid Budget has a \$400 million dollar shortfall. The State can tax the hospitals and match that with federal dollars and balance the Medicaid shortfall.

In addition, I believe you can look for Ethics Reform this year. The target will be the unlimited gifts to legislators ranging from sporting events to a spending limit on dinners with the main focus being transparency.

As you know all politics start at the local level. While GANA is a great organization, its members must reach out to their Senator and House members. With a part time legislature, it is our responsibility to educate the legislators on your issues. There are 180 House members and 56 Senators, 87 of them have a 2 years or less of tenure so we are always trying to educate new members of the role of CRNAs. ■

2013 GANA Calendar

GANA Board Meetings:

March 9, 2013	GANA office in Fayetteville
May 18, 2013	Location TBD
August 24, 2013	At GRU in Augusta

Other Meetings and Events:

January 20-26, 2013	National Nurse Anesthetists Week
February 5, 2013	GANA Capitol Day
February 20, 2013	Georgia Rural Health Day
February 21-23, 2013	Assembly of School Faculty – Tucson, AZ
April 14-17, 2013	AANA Mid-Year Assembly – Arlington, VA
August 10-13, 2013	AANA Annual Meeting in Las Vegas – The Mirage
October 4-6, 2013	GANA Annual Fall Meeting – Stone Mountain

Proposed Calendar for To & Fro:

May 2013
September 2013

GANA Board Meeting

**The next GANA Board Meeting
is scheduled for Saturday,
March 9, 2013, at the GANA
office in Fayetteville.**

***This meeting is open to
all GANA members.***

**If you want to attend this meeting,
please RSVP to
ganaoffice@bellsouth.net
or call 770.487.3900.**

Welcome to Wellness in the New Year

by Barb Waldron, CRNA

The 2012 GANA Fall Meeting was a big success. The Wellness Exhibit was bigger and better than ever. Martha Kral, CRNA is now on the AANA Peer Assistance Committee. She was instrumental in expanding our exhibit, and she should be commended for her effort and her interest in our health. For more information go to the AANA website. A New Year brings a lot to mind and I always consider *What am I Going to Change in This New Year?* Change is always difficult. I have found that if I write out a plan of action, more things tend to happen and get accomplished. A big part of change is the attitude toward change. The idea that gave rise to the exhibit was the picture of a kitten smiling, so Martha came up with the Top 10 reasons TO SMILE. So try this on family, fellow workers, friends, and people you pass in your life. If you already make it a priority it makes a difference.

Top 10 Reasons to Smile

1. Smiling Makes Us Attractive
2. Smiling Changes Our Mood
3. Smiling Is Contagious
4. Smiling Relieves Stress
5. Smiling Boosts Your Immune System
6. Smiling Lowers Your Blood Pressure
7. Smiling Releases Endorphins, Natural Pain Killers and Serotonin
8. Smiling Lifts the Face and Makes You Look Younger
9. Smiling Makes You Seem Successful
10. Smiling Helps You Stay Positive

From Martha Kral:

Speaking of wellness and taking care of yourself, you should optimize your workplace ergonomics. Ergonomics is the study of the physical interaction between humans and their work environment.

The anesthesia setting offers unique challenges due to placement of equipment and in particular, the placement of the screen/monitor. These monitors are often higher than the anesthetist's head and thus you have to tilt your head backwards to look up.

The problem with this situation is that it can cause neck problems. You have a natural C curve in your neck, called a Lordotic curve. This curve should always be maintained. Not having the proper cervical curve can lead to chronic neck pain, stiff neck, upper shoulder stiffness and other symptoms.

The ideal vertical position for the screen depends on the size of the screen and the size of the casing around the screen. A good position can be found by sitting comfortably in an office

chair. Close both eyes and relax, then, slowly reopen them. Where the gaze initially focuses should be when the eyes open is the place to put the center of the computer screen. If you cannot position the screen differently, then perhaps you can reposition the height of the chair. Every operating room should replace any anesthetists' stools with good-quality office chairs.

You may not have control over such things as moving or purchasing equipment. However, you can do your best to improve ergonomic conditions. Take frequent breaks, not just a coffee break, but a spine break. Stretch, take a short walk, get the blood flowing. When you are at your "desk", avoid staying in one position for a long time. Try switching between sitting and standing. Share any suggestions or solutions with others. Unfortunately, ergonomics is an area of anesthesia that has received little attention and it should be addressed through more education and solutions to improve workplace wellness.

For more on this subject and other wellness readings go to www.AANAwellness.com. ■

[www.aana.com/
peerassist.aspx](http://www.aana.com/peerassist.aspx)

Hotlines
Peer Assistance
800.654.5167

Anesthetists in
Recovery (AIR)
215.635.0183

Georgia Regents University Nurse Anesthesia Program Report

by James Masiongale, CRNA, MHS
Director and Clinical Coordinator

I know we just changed the name to Georgia Health Sciences University and now it is Georgia Regents University. You think you are confused, the Class of 2012 just graduated in December and had the choice to have a MCG or GHSU diploma. The Class of 2013 and 2014 will have a choice to have a GHSU or GRU diploma and the class to start in August will have a GRU diploma. Just goes to show how fast things can change in today's world.

Congratulations to the 20 members of the Class of 2012 for completing all requirements and graduating in December, as of this writing they are awaiting notification to take boards. The members of the Class of 2013 are officially seniors and have begun their second semester of clinical to include specialty rotations such as open-heart, peds, neuro, and OB - to name a few. The Class of 2014 successfully completed their first semester of didactic and although I cannot prove it, probably slept the entire month break they enjoyed over the holidays.

The program conducted interviews in early December for the Class of 2015. There were 58 interviews with 30 applicants being offered a position. At this time we have a verbal acceptance from the 30 applicants and they will begin in August. This is the first class to reflect the increase in numbers due to the collaboration with the Medical Center of Central Georgia (MCCG). We currently have five students rotating

to that site but will increase to 10 in August 2014 with the 30 students finish didactic.

Many of clinical sites may experience a temporary decline in number or frequency of students due to the addition of the MCCG site. Please understand that this is temporary and it will return back to exactly where it was once we can get the numbers calibrated. I am doing my best to divide the mix as fairly as possible.

The students and faculty would like to thank those of you who have made donations to the Nurse Anesthesia Program foundation. These funds are utilized solely for student activities and are not for program operations. If you would like to donate, make the check payable to: GRU Foundation Fund 11302 and mail to Melvenia Blanchard at 987 St. Sebastian Way, EC 5440, Augusta, GA, 30912. She will see that it gets to the correct location.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to send me an email or give me a call:

James Masiongale
Director & Clinical Coordinator
Nursing Anesthesia Program
Georgia Regents University
(706) 721-8215 • jmasiong@gru.edu ■

*Plan now to attend
Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists'*



75th Annual Meeting & Gala
October 4-6, 2013

**Evergreen Marriott Conference Center
Stone Mountain, Georgia**



Congratulations, Graduates!

2012 MCCG/Mercer University Nurse Anesthesia Graduates



Back row (L to R): Leslie New, Jennifer Garrett, Brandi Justice, Ronald Griffin, Jr. , Olanrewaju Akigbogun, Daniel Skinner, Zackary Whitaker, Brooks Cauley, Catherine Johnson, Tina Powers, and Keri Jones; Front Row (L to R): Brenda Davis, Leslie Garner, Jayma Perry, Adrienne Collazo, Nicole Kennedy, Michelle Broach, and Shawna Rodebaugh

2012 Georgia Health Science University Nurse Anesthesia Graduates



Front row (L to R): Jennifer Simonetti, Nicole Daniels; Middle row: Kim Gibbs, Brian Lindenborn, Amy Frank, Kadee Newberry, Palmer Hummel, Christine Futch, Allison Jester, Courtney Carroll; Back row (L to R): Linda Brown, Lori Littlejohn, David Hardy, John Mestas, Sarah Hightower, John Redding, Jon Griggs; Not pictured: Brandon Dillard, Rebecca Barger, and Rachel Murchison

Jennifer Simonetti wins the GANA 2012 Outstanding Student Nurse Anesthetist of the Year Award

Ms. Simonetti is a senior in excellent standing in the Nursing Anesthesia Program at Georgia Health Sciences University, maintaining a 3.95 GPA. She is an active participant in events and conferences sponsored by GANA and AANA. Jennifer accepted a space on the alternates list for the fall 2010 admission process, and was offered admission very late in that process due to cancelations stemming from the proposed significant budget cuts and program closure during spring semester of 2010. Jennifer not only rose to the challenge of preparing herself to relocate to the Augusta area from Leavenworth, KS within three weeks, she has successfully met the challenges and rigors of this program with a calm and confident attitude, allowing for sound critical thinking. She has consistently received high praise from clinical preceptors during her rotations. Her love for the discipline of nursing is not only evident in her approach to her studies, but is clearly visible in her past professional performance as well as her willingness to serve as a mentor and role model to newly admitted students and second year students preparing for clinical rotations. Additionally, Jennifer is a strong advocate for the GHSU nursing

anesthesia program as well as for the profession as a whole, confidently serving as a student representative at campus and community sponsored meetings, and unselfishly sharing pertinent information with her fellow students and program administrators alike. Jennifer's tenacity and flexibility are also admirable attributes. She has accomplished and maintained her commendable eminence in the program while dealing with the challenges of a quick relocation and transitioning from a working professional to a full time student, ensuring the least amount of negative impact on her family and home life

as possible. There is no doubt that Jennifer will become a valuable leader in our profession and an outstanding mentor for future Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists. Congratulations Jennifer on all of

GANA Outstanding Student Nurse Anesthetist of the Year Award winner, GHSU senior Jennifer Simonetti with her Professor, Amy Masiongale



your accomplishments and on winning the GANA 2012 Outstanding Student Nurse Anesthetist of the Year Award! ■

Plan to Attend the
2013 AANA Annual Meeting
Las Vegas, NV ♦ August 10-13

AANA News

by Tony Chipas, CRNA, PhD

I want to wish all of you a happy holiday season and a prosperous new year. We have much to be thankful for this year despite the challenges we face personally, professionally and as a nation.

Several of us recently returned from the Fall Leadership Academy in Colorado Springs in November. For those of you who did not make it, you missed a tremendous meeting. Not only was it in one of the most beautiful locations I have been, but it was the revitalization of a great meeting. The AANA Program Committee gets high marks for putting together a great set of speakers and topics that helped elevate the knowledge of everyone in attendance. Next year we will be adding an additional track for the State Reimbursement Specialists. The meeting will be in Miami Beach on November 9 - 10, 2013. This is a great meeting for not only current leaders but for anyone who is interested in a leadership position in the future.

As most of you already know, on November 1 CMS announced the Physician Payment Schedule for 2013. We had been advocating for the inclusion of CRNA Chronic Pain Management Services that had been excluded by two of the Medicare payers last year. In their decision, not only did CMS include chronic pain but also recognized reimbursement to CRNAs for all services that are allowed by individual state laws. This in essence recognized the full scope of practice for nurse anesthetists. This decision was because many of you took the time to contact CMS with your comments. We also need to thank the COA and NBCRNA for working with the AANA Board in developing a letter of support to CMS. This letter was cited as one of the reasons the decision went in our favor. The work is not over; now the issues go to the individual states.

Many of you have expressed concern about the NBCRNA moving out of our Park Ridge offices and what will happen next. Your AANA Board is likewise concerned about our

relationships with both of our external organizations, the COA and NBCRNA. We are taking a measured approach that will hopefully preserve our interactions but we are also aware that our job is to protect the members of the AANA. We are working on improving the relations between our organizations and there will be more information to share after the Boards meet to discuss operational issues.

AANA membership is currently around 94% of all CRNAs and our numbers continue to grow. If you have not paid your dues, please contact the AANA and you can arrange for payment. This year there are many ways to pay your dues including payment plans. As all of you also know, the AANA did not mail our membership cards this year. You can download and print your card on the secure side of the AANA website. Your board made this decision to save the association money. The savings was around \$24,000.

The AANA PAC had a great year this year and I want to thank all of you who contributed to this important cause. We raised and distributed well over \$1,000,000 to candidates who are friendly to CRNA issues. I am also happy to report that 94% of the candidates, both Republican and Democrats who we supported, won their elections. Our DC office and the CRNAs of the PAC committee need to be commended for their hard work.

I am here to serve you the members of Region 2 and all CRNAs in our great association. If you have any questions, concerns or comments, please contact me. The worse things we can have are rumors. You can either email me at achipas@aanabod.com or call me at (843) 412-0951.

Again thank you for allowing me to serve you and our wonderful profession. But most of all, thank you for doing what you do best – safe, effective anesthesia. ■

To & Fro

Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists
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Prestigious Past, Promising Future

(continued from page 1)

we will continue to strive to achieve it. We have already begun implementing some of the ideas garnered during the retreat. Despite our successes, there are some steps we can implement to save time and to operate more efficiently.

In addition to the actions the board does each year such as monitor legislation and regulation for items that could negatively impact upon CRNAs scope of practice, we worked on how to move forward to the next level as a board, we wanted to know how to improve member participation, improve PAC contributions, improve our legislator relationships, develop a fall meeting that members want to and do attend, and development of a leadership succession pool just to highlight some of the items. In the upcoming issues I will update you on our progress and as always welcome your input.

Several board members and I attended the AANA Leadership Academy in Colorado Springs November 16th – 18th. There were also several other Georgia CRNAs in attendance as well due to their AANA positions. This was the first year for the newly designed meeting intended to replace many of the individual bootcamps the AANA provides for various positions such as President-Elect, GRC, and FPD. The

meeting provided very insightful information from experts in the area and allowed collaboration between the states by sharing ideas and networking. My personal impression is that the meeting was a huge success. Having attended two of the three bootcamps previously I can attest to the fact that this meeting is one example of how the AANA is constantly working to improve and find ways to cut costs to better serve the CRNA membership.

We as Georgia CRNAs reach a marvelous milestone this year. We will be celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the GANA at the Annual Fall Meeting in Stone Mountain October 4th-6th, 2013. We have a top-notch program committee that is working on making this the best GANA meeting ever. Mark your calendars and request time off from work now, you do not want to miss this one!

In closing I would again like to express my appreciation in allowing me to serve in this position. I assure you that we as your board take this seriously and keep the overall memberships' interest foremost when making any decisions. If you have questions, comments, or suggestions please visit the web page under contacts. I promise to respond as quickly as possible. ■