

Off the Cuff

Spring 2005

Volume 24, Issue 1



Inside this issue:

Officers	<i>P 2</i>
Presidents Message	<i>Pp 3-4</i>
Public relations	<i>P 6</i>
State GRC	<i>P 7</i>
Exec. Director-Lobbyist	<i>P 9</i>
Federal GRC	<i>Pp 10-11</i>
Spring Meeting	<i>Pp 14-15</i>



Off the Cuff is a semi-annual publication of the Nebraska Association of Nurse Anesthetists. Opinions stated are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of NANA, the Board of directors, or the Publication committee which administers the publication, unless otherwise stated.

Publication of an advertisement in *Off the Cuff* does not constitute endorsement by the Association of either the advertiser or the advertisement. The NANA Board of Directors does not make it a practice to endorse any one-product or service. The discretion is left up to the reader.

Executive Officers

President

Phil Powers

104 South Parkway

Columbus, NE 68601

Vice President

Bob Bush

6500 So. 31st St.

Lincoln, NE 68516

President-Elect

Tim Glidden

16132 Lafayette Ave.

Omaha, NE 68118

Secretary-Treasurer

Julie Vaughn

4675 Sunset Dr.

Blair, NE 68008

Board of directors

Larry Finley (04-06)

1409 N. 9th Street

O'Neil, NE 68763

Chuck Frisch (04-06)

1021 Dakota

Alliance, NE 69301

Nancy Gondringer (04-06)

7216 Parkridge Circle

Lincoln, NE 68516

Celeste Hinzman (03-05)

1304 N. 160th Ave.

Omaha, NE 68118

Tracy Holsing (04-05)

8426 West Birch Rd.

Clatonia, NE 68328

Sarah Theoharis (03-05)

1532 Westwood Terrace

Hastings, NE 68901

Presidents Message Spring 2005 Phil Powers CRNA

Just when you thought that you had it all figured out... the AANA and the ASA are talking to each other, the Cornhuskers have a losing season, the Boston Red Sox win the World Series, something called a *tsumani* wipes out over a hundred thousand people and Phil Powers is still the president of the Nebraska Association of Nurse Anesthetists. The point is that the unexpected can happen. As nurse anesthetists we are well aware that this is true. Vigilance is that essential quality in all nurse anesthetists that allows us to anticipate, recognize, and react to the unexpected. The experience gained not only helps us react but to be proactive. Vigilance is what makes us successful as individuals, professionals and as an organization. The Nebraska Association of Nurse Anesthetists remains vigilant at the local, state and national levels.

First, if you were not at our Fall Meeting, you may not be aware that I was unexpectedly asked by the Board of Directors to continue as NANA President. I accepted the request based on the goals that we established when I became president. At that time we resolved to build our board to the point where their experiences would give them the ability to comfortably assume more responsibility. I agreed to maintain my vigilance for one more year and I sincerely appreciate the confidence that the board and the membership have shown.

On the local level we are all challenged daily to maintain our standards within the confines that can be placed on us by both our nursing and medicine colleagues. Politics can get in the way! Some of our CRNA's currently are facing challenges to the use of fluoroscopy in the treatment of their pain patients. When faced with these challenges, the question that always brings things back to basics is, "What is the right thing to do for the patient?" NANA stands ready to repel any challenge that denies care to our patients by restricting our ability to practice.

Vigilance is what makes us successful as individuals and as an organization

On the state level, our primary area of interest remains the Advanced Practice Nurse legislation that we have been involved with for a number of years. This legislation inches ever closer to being adopted. As introduced in this session of the legislature, LB256 retains all the essential elements of the current statutes that define the practice of nurse anesthesia and establishes a board of advanced practice nursing. I was proud to testify on behalf of the bill before the Health and Human Services Committee of the Nebraska Legislature on January 27th. As a group, the advanced practice nurses who testified were recognized for their concise, professional testimony by the committee. A special thanks and recognition should go to Nancy Gonderinger, CRNA who testified on behalf of the Nebraska Board of Nursing. Concerns over the composition of the board that will be established remain to be resolved with the Nebraska Medical Association.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

As a state association we continue to be alert to the needs of our members and our students. Our spring program takes a different track than usual this year in that it moves into areas other than just the “science” of anesthesia. We had planned to present a program on topics like the business of anesthesia, Board of Nursing issues and “wellness” even before the AANA made “wellness” a priority. As John McDonough told us last fall, we are all at risk of addiction in anesthesia; especially our students. Diana Quinlan will tell us on Saturday April 16th how we can recognize and respond to this challenge of our profession. She has devoted years to peer assistance and is recognized as a leader on this issue by the AANA.

In addition to supporting the academic efforts of nurse anesthesia students, NANA has worked to develop the future leaders of nurse anesthesia. As we began the New Year, the NANA Board of Directors was pleased to add a second student to the board. Paula Norby from the Mount Marty School of Nurse Anesthesia joins Matt Petta from the Bryan/LGH School on our board. With the AANA Mid-Year Assembly coming in April, all members have the opportunity to support the future leaders of our profession. The AANA **Sponsor-a-Student** program has been very successful over the years in sponsoring students to the Annual Meeting and now can be used to sponsor students to the Mid-Year Assembly. Information on what this experience means to students and how you can assist is found in the AANA News Bulletin.

Nationally, the interests of nurse anesthetists are served by the vigilance of the Chicago and Washington, DC staff of the AANA as well as your AANA Board of Directors. Staff changes and reorganization in Chicago and Washington are being done with just one thing in mind--to serve the members. Wendell Spencer continues to represent Region IV, and you will find his report in this newsletter. NANA member and past-president Steve Wooden would like the opportunity to serve AANA members as Treasurer of the AANA next year. Be sure to vote for him when your AANA ballot arrives in July!

Steve will also be sharing his expertise on the “Business of Anesthesia” at our Spring Meeting on Friday evening April 15th. Perhaps it is fitting that we address business issues on the day when our taxes are due. As always, I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the meeting and sharing your recent anesthesia experiences. I always learn something from our very skilled membership.

**2005 Spring Meeting.
Jim Cuddeford**

Please see the agenda for the Spring Meeting in this edition of Off the Cuff. The NANA Board of Directors decided to try doing a shorter meeting this time. You will notice this meeting begins on Friday Afternoon and is completed late Saturday afternoon. We will be inviting all nurses to come to the Saturday sessions. The Saturday hours have been submitted for credit for all nurses. Please tell all your friends. I think the information presented will be helpful for all nurses.

See you in Omaha!



**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF NURSE ANESTHETISTS**



Washington, DC

**72ND ANNUAL
M E E T I N G**

August 6-10, 2005

Standing Committees

Program

Jim Cudderford - Lincoln

Tim Arthur – Aurora

Federal governmental Relations

Nancy Gondringer – Lincoln

Bylaws

Chuck Frisch – Alliance

**State Governmental Relations/
Publications**

Bob Bush – Lincoln

Finance

Julie Vaughan - Blair

NANA Spring 2005 Meeting Hotel Information

A block of rooms has been set aside for this event at the rate of \$99.00 / 109.00 / 119.00 / 129.00 (Single through Quad occupancy.) Hotel cut-off date is March 20, 2005. When making reservations, mention Nebraska Association of Nurse Anesthetists or Anesthesia Meeting to insure the special rates.

Embassy Suites Omaha Downtown / Old Market

555 South 10th St.
(402) 346-9000

Early Registration

Early registration will help the Program Committee be able to plan appropriately for this meeting. CRNAs registering for this workshop should utilize the enclosed registration form. Further information may be found on the NANA website (<http://www.neana.org>), or you may contact Tim Arthur, CRNA (meeting_info_2005@yahoo.com , **Voice Mail 402-694-6007 Ext 500**). Payment may be made by check or Visa/Master Card.

Parking: We are working to include onsite parking. Valet parking is available at your own expense.

Sarah Theoharis
Chairperson - Public Relations

Prizes! Prizes! Yes prizes for your public relation efforts! Read on:

Everyday each of us is more than likely doing some public relations. Saturday morning, February 19th, Bob Bush and I set up a booth at the Nebraska Student Nurses Convention in Hastings. We also hope to be represented at the Nebraska Nurses Association convention October 2005 in Kearney. The Nebraska Rural Health Association Conference will also to be held in Kearney this September. There are many opportunities to make contacts with other associations. What I hope to capture in the scrapbook are the PR efforts of Nebraska's CRNAs from this past year. Whether you have lectured to a rotary group, a high school class, or even to some colleagues within your hospital, take the time to send a picture or even some details about the presentation. I will add it to the Nebraska PR Scrapbook. This scrapbook is due to the national office in July, so I am asking for any submissions by June 1st. We won 2 years ago and hope to do the same again this year. I also plan to compile a scrapbook or some form of entry next year, so if you have already given a lecture and plan to do so again after July, just remember to take a photo.

Now on to the prizes. To get the word out to the community about what we do as CRNAs, encourage you all to submit entries for rewards. There are three ways to win: 1) Best overall effort (most entries or spent the most time on a certain activity), 2) Most creative effort or entry, 3) Best effort during CRNA Week. Prizes can be chosen from the AANA Bookstore and include a leather cell phone case, sunglasses, t-shirts, etc. So what do you have to lose! Send it to me via e-mail, snail mail, or bring it to the conference in Omaha in April.

Next on my list is to tell you my other goals to improve PR for the CRNAs in Nebraska. We need a new brochure for the NANA with updated information. Anyone interested in helping with this please contact me. Matt Petta, a SRNA at Bryan, plans to complete the manpower study for his master's project. The updated information that he compiles will be an important part of the brochure. We hope to abstract this information onto a brochure with a map of Nebraska showing the anesthesia services provided in each county. This will make a big impression both nationally and across

(Continued on page 7)

Bob Bush State GRC

In April 2001 during a routine inspection by the Missouri Valley Cancer Consortium it was discovered that personnel at the Fremont Cancer Clinic were following “improper procedures”, reusing syringes. Subsequent medical investigation in June of that year identified the first of what would become ninety-nine hepatitis C infected patients. The clinic closed about one year later and both the medical director Dr. Tahir Ali Javed and senior nurse Linda Prochaska eventually had their practice licenses revoked.

An event of this magnitude has financial costs as well as the devastating personal cost already mentioned. If we try to estimate the monetary expense a huge range emerges. In 2003 a plaintiff lawyer stated that these patients will incur at least \$100,000 in medical costs and in 2001 the maximum malpractice award allowed was \$1.25 million. Furthermore since the inception of the Nebraska Excess Liability Fund (NELF) the “average” award has been \$312,000. Simple mathematics demonstrates a range of \$10 to \$124 million and a total “average” award of \$31 million. To add to the financial ambiguity about 56 court petitions have been settled but no one is talking for fear of unduly affecting the outcome of the remaining suits.

A million here a million there and pretty soon you're talking real money

-Senator Everett Dirksen

Mr. Tim Wagner, director of the Nebraska Department of Insurance, which oversees the administration of the NELF has gone record saying that the fund is in no danger of insolvency. The fund has \$58 million in assets and Mr. Wagner projects \$63 million in liabilities. Additionally, the projected \$5 million shortfall can “easily” be made up by the interest earned on the assets. Obviously the department knows something I don't.

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 6)

the state, to include our legislators, informing everyone of the importance of anesthesia services provided by CRNAs.

Another poster-map I hope to complete would be similar to the poster the AANA made this year. This is a map of the U.S. and has several pictures of CRNAs across the nation performing all kinds of anesthesia services. So, again, if I could get a picture from CRNAs across Nebraska performing a specific anesthesia service that would be great. I will try to contact some of you at the Spring Meeting to see if anyone has a specialty they would like highlighted or recognized.

Sarah Theoharis
1814 Colonial Place
Hastings, NE 68901
(402) 463-2643
stheoharis@charter.net

(Continued from page 7)

I have to wonder just who gets the tab on this one? Dr. Javed and Nurse Prochaska have few assets to seize. Besides, Dr. Javed now lives in his native Pakistan and even if he did still live in Nebraska his personal liability cannot exceed the usual \$200,000/600,000 limit as upheld by the Lancaster County District court. A pitiful sum in this litigation black hole. The hospital that leased the clinic space was just a landlord, not a partner. The patients are presumably personally insured or if not I assume Medicare/Medicaid eligible therefore insurance and their policyholders will pay for medical care. What insurance will not pay is the deserved litigation award.

Ninety-nine cancer patients came looking for help during a desperate time in their lives, what they received was something far different than help. The greatest tragedy of this whole affair is that it did not have to happen. Personally I would like to see a fair and just agreement between the NELF and the Fremont 99.



Ron Jensen
Executive Director-NANA lobbyist

As this is written, the Nebraska Legislature has been in session in Lincoln for nineteen of its constitutionally allotted ninety working days. Bill introduction wrapped up for the year some two weeks ago, and public hearings are in full swing. They'll be completed by late March, and the body will go home for the year on June 3rd.

The Clinical Nurse Specialist Act, LB 265, had its public hearing on January 27th. At the hearing, the bill received broad support, with the only opposition coming from the Nebraska Medical Association. Just from talking with the lobbyist for the NMA, it sounds to me as though some common ground can probably be found on these two provisions, allowing the bill to go forward.

If the bill comes to represent a compromise, it can probably be achieved yet in the current session of the Legislature...particularly if a senator would prioritize it. If it has to be fought out with the NMA, LB 256 most likely will not become law until the 2006 session, if then. The advantage of LB 256 to CRNA's is that it consolidates the governance of the various advance nurse specialties under one board.

LB 256 consolidates governance of all advanced practice nurses under one board

On another issue, CRNA's should expect to get used to hearing about a crisis in Medicaid. While there really is no Social Security crisis...just some folks who want to change it...there really is a Medicaid crisis, primarily because policy makers have decided there is. And this is true on both the state and federal levels. One of the "reform" ideas that has been thrown out at the federal level is to discontinue federal financial participation in those services considered "optional" under the Social Security Act. If my recollection is correct, that includes nurse anesthesia. At the state, level, Senator Phil Erdman has introduced LB 709, the Medicaid Reform Act. Senator Erdman envisions a process similar to the one used over the past two years to devise and set in motion the state overhaul of behavioral health services. This year's bill says merely, that we in Nebraska are going to reform Medicaid, and here's how we will go about it, culminating in a bill being introduced in the 2006 session which would make significant changes in the program. But today we do not know what those changes will be. There really isn't anything to be done about this as of yet, but it is certainly worth keeping an eye on as the issue develops over the next few months.

Editors note:

-LB 256 has unanimously passed through the Health and Human Services Committee with some changes to what was originally introduced by Senators Price (26) and Combs (32). It awaits floor debate. Feel free to contact your senator in support of this bill. For information about this bill go to www.unicam.state.ne.us or www.neana.org legislative info.

-LB 709 remains in the Health and Human Services Committee.

Federal Governmental Relations

Nancy Gondringer CRNA

This past weekend I was honored to attend the AANA Federal Political Directors workshop in Dallas Texas at the Gaylord Convention center. It was two days filled with excellent educational resource material. Our current Federal Political Director Frank Purcell and Brian Kelly were our two main speakers.

We discussed how to motivate and organize a grass root plan for our political action groups. They helped each FPD understand his/her role and relationship between the state and Federal levels. We spent several hours on the issues that will be addressed at the Mid-Year Spring Assembly meeting in Washington DC this coming April. The four major issues that will be reviewed and discussed with our Congressional and Senate representatives will be:

1. Medicare Act that will help to reverse the cuts that are planned for 2006. HR 1 helped to delay the proposed cuts in Medicare Part B and have allowed approximately 1.5% increases in conversion factors over the past two year. If this bill is not reversed or revised Medicare payments for all will be reduced between 5-7%/year. For anesthesia providers in Nebraska this should be very concerning as well as its over all effects on anesthesia care.

2. Malpractice reform is the second major issue that will need to be addressed with our representatives in DC. Rising jury awards, reduction in malpractice providers and higher malpractice rates will be addressed.

3. Patient safety is the third issue that AANA members will discuss with their congressional and senatorial representatives. Since AANA's mission is "Patient Safety" support of medical error reporting that is free from liability concerns should be highly supported by our membership.

4. Educational funding continues to be under attack. Currently the need to strengthen the CRNA profession who has a 12% vacancy rate, CRNA Workforce Study 2003, needs to be strengthened not weakened by reducing proposed funding. Nurse Education received 140 MM in 2004 while Graduate medical Education is greater than 10 billion. We need to continue to lobby for additional funding for both graduate and teaching funding.

Over the next few weeks I will be contacting several of you to help me to develop individual key contacts with local and federal representatives. I know that we are all busy and several members will state I am not political, I am too old or too new to the system but I will not accept any of those as excuses. With the help of our national office we will have materials that

**Regardless of age or anesthesia experience
you will benefit us all within our profession**

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

will help to facilitate the requirements of our positions. Remember this is about our profession and not politics. I will commit to anyone who is willing to try to lobby his/her congress or senatorial candidate will have my support in teaching you the tricks of the processes that make it fun and exciting. Regarding age or length of experience in the field of anesthesia your knowledge and experiences will benefit all of us in our profession.

I hope each of you will consider attending the Spring Assembly in Washington DC. It is a very valuable meeting. It is fun, a great city to visit as well as a place to meet other CRNA's who are working to protect their profession. When I call please say yes and we will go forward in developing the best FPD contact list.

Dear CRNA Colleague:

I need your help! I have been asked by the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) and our state association to update our records and seek our new grassroots support. Would you be willing to help out? If so, let us know what you'd like to do.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donate to CRNA-PAC | <input type="checkbox"/> Will write letters to Congress |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Will call Senators/Reps | <input type="checkbox"/> Will get involved in campaign |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Will attend Mid-Year Assembly | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____

Work phone: _____

Email: _____

Secure fax: _____

Nancy Gondringer
7216 Parkridge Circle
Lincoln, NE 68516
ngondringer@stez.org



Steve Wooden CRNA, MS
AANA Treasurer Candidate
Position Statement
Future Solutions Now

The American Association of Nurse Anesthetists has been an enormous driving force for quality health care in the 20th century. As we enter a new millennium, this organization must continue on the path which it's founders so wisely envisioned and it's subsequent leaders have forged. The basis of our organization must remain the same, regardless of outside forces.

Professionalism:

We must preserve the professional standards so many have sacrificed to obtain. We must continue our efforts in obtaining public recognition as highly educated, diligent, and capable practitioners. We must not succumb to political pressures which would lower our professional expectations.

Education:

The strength of our organization, and our profession, is based on the quality of our educational programs. Our detractors will point to the weakest as an example of our capabilities. For this reason our educational standards must remain uncompromising and continuously improving. We must continually evaluate and implement changes in our educational programs which help to meet public expectations.

continued page 9

Practice:

Nurse Anesthesia as a practice continues to be complex, and offers a variety of settings and relationships. One of the strengths of our profession is its diversity, and it should be preserved. While working to promote job security for all practice settings, the organization must find ways to promote the ability of CRNAs to choose the practice arrangement which best suits their needs.

2005 NANA Spring Meeting & Workshop
Embassy Suites Hotel

Omaha, Nebraska

Friday, 4-15-05

- 1400 Registration
1500 *Anesthesia Billing and Compliance Issues* Phil Blann
1550 *Prevention And Treatment Of Hypotension During Spinal And Epidural Analgesia And Anesthesia In The Parturient*
Matthew Montgomery, CRNA, MS
1620 *Transient Neurologic Syndrome After Spinal Anesthesia*
Jason Peldo, CRNA, MS
1650 Refreshment / Stretch Break
1710 *Business of Anesthesia I* Steven Wooden, CRNA, MS
1800 *Business of Anesthesia II* Steven Wooden, CRNA, MS
1850 Refreshments / Reception in Exhibit Hall

Saturday, 4-16-05

- 0700 Registration / Continental Breakfast
0800 *Wearing Masks: The Dilemma of Addiction In Anesthesia*
Diana Quinlan, CRNA, MA
0850 *Wearing Masks: (cont'd)* Diana Quinlan, CRNA, MA
0940 Break in Exhibit Hall
1030 *Challenges In Returning To Work After Illness*
Diana Quinlan, CRNA, MA
1120 *Infection Control In Anesthesia*
Sharon Hadenfeldt, CRNA, PhD(c)
1210 Luncheon / NANA Annual Business Meeting
1345 *When Sex Comes To Work: Sexual Harassment In The Workplace*
Diana Quinlan, CRNA, MA
1435 *Violence In The Workplace: Are We Really Safe In Our Hospitals?*
Diana Quinlan, CRNA, MA
1525 Stretch / Refreshment Break (20 min.)
1545 *Nebraska Board Of Nursing Update* Nancy Gondringer, CRNA, MA
1635 *Roundtable: Wellness In The CRNA*
Diana Quinlan, Sharon Hadenfeldt, Nancy Gondringer
1725 Closing Remarks, Receive Certificates of Attendance
1725 Post-workshop NANA Board Meeting



2005 NANA SPRING ANESTHESIA WORKSHOP
April 15, 16, 2005 *Omaha, Nebraska*
Embassy Suites Omaha Downtown / Old Market *555 South 10th St.*

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____
 AANA# _____ Daytime Phone _____ Email: _____
 Signature (for credit card) _____

<input type="checkbox"/> Full workshop	\$ 250.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Friday Only	\$ 100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	No Charge	<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Only	200.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-CRNA (Saturday only)	70.00	<input type="checkbox"/> After 4-8-05	Add 15.00

Payment: Write total amount \$

Check Make Checks Payable to: Nebraska Association of Nurse Anesthetists

Please charge my Visa MasterCard

Card # _____ Exp: _____

Mail Registration to:
 NANA c/o Tim Arthur
 214 West L Street
 Aurora, Nebraska 685818
 402-694-5753

Cancellation charge:	
Before 4-8-05	\$ 50.00
After 4-8-05	50%
After 4-13-05	100%



1701 K Street, Suite B
Lincoln, NE 68508

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

Visit your web site
WWW.NEANA.ORG