

Greetings everyone! I would like to first thank you for allowing me to serve as your Indiana Association President. For those of you who do not know me, let me give you a quick tale of who I am and where I've been.

I am a 1996 graduate of the US Army Graduate Program in Nurse Anesthesia. I served for just over 14 years in the military before coming back home to Indiana. I reside in Bluffton, a small town in the northeast part of the state. I have been involved in the state association for the past 6 years, serving on the state board for 3 years and as your President Elect during the previous 2 years. I also have served a 3-year term on the CRNA-PAC, the AANA national political action committee. I have also spent each of those years traveling to Washington, DC to lobby for CRNAs in congress. I tell you all this only to assure you that I will work hard and reliably to serve our interests in Indiana and in Washington.

Right now is a very exciting time for CRNAs in Indiana. Our salaries are very competitive and our practice is generally not fettered with extremes of supervision or direction. But there are always challenges to our practice. Always there are groups or individuals who will try to limit what we do or can do, both financially and in our clinical endeavors. My responsibility as President and our collective responsibility as the Board of Directors and Officers are to be watchful for such challenges and ready to meet them. But that is not all we do or should do. We also are always looking to improve our practice. We need to be able to assure Indiana residents that they will have access to anesthesia care and that we will provide cost-effective, quality, expert anesthesia care when they need it.

This sounds simple enough, but even as I write this there are bills in our statehouse and potential rules in boards and committees that could jeopardize the very goals we have to provide safe, expert, and cost effective anesthesia. We have CRNAs in Indiana who have spent YEARS fighting to protect our patients from poorly written rules and regulations. We have testified at the statehouse no fewer than three times over the past few months, and are already planning to be there again in the first part of 2008.

As you may know, a CRNA from Ft. Wayne has been appointed to the BON and is already establishing himself as a forward thinker among the group. His name is Scott Johns, and I see him regularly to discuss our issues. It is premature to discuss specifics, but the BON is already looking closely at improving the status of CRNAs in our state. This kind of relationship with a member of the BON, as well as his intimate knowledge of what CRNAs are and how we practice is invaluable. The fact that we are good friends gives us a voice we have essentially never had in nursing in Indiana. Our resolve and dedication to press forward with issues we face will be constant and fervent.

I would also like to congratulate Jackie Rowles, CRNA, and former IANA President, on her election as the AANA President-Elect. Jackie has been a shaper of our practice both here and nationally for several years and will now have us beaming with pride as she represents all CRNAs, but from a very healthy Hoosier perspective! She will assume the role as AANA President this summer in Minneapolis at the AANA Annual Meeting. Way to go, Jackie!

As I close, I would ask for any of our members to contact me regarding any questions or concerns you have about either your practice or our association. Please let us know your needs and expectations. I can assure you we will listen and try to exceed each and every one. We will not be perfect, but we will be perfectly sincere in our efforts. Again, thank you for this chance to serve.....and see you at the next meeting!

David Shepherd