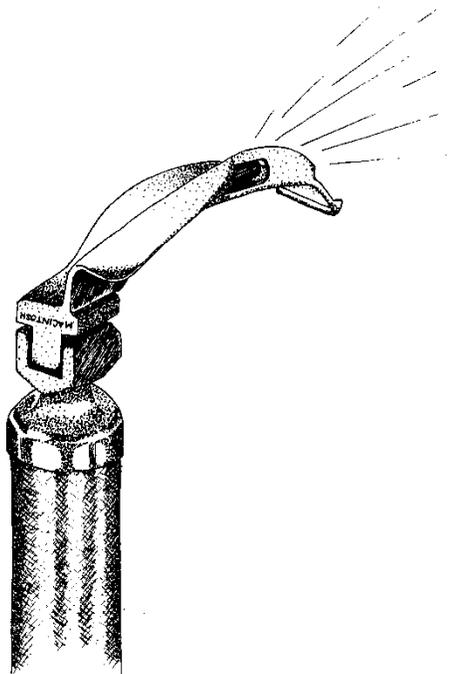


AKANA

ALASKA ASSOCIATION OF NURSE ANESTHETISTS

C/O ALASKA NURSES ASSOCIATION · 3701 E. TUDOR RD., SUITE 208 · ANCHORAGE, AK 99507



Newsletter

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Alaska Association of Nurse Anesthetists

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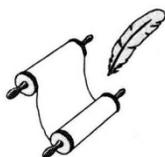
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Editorial



First off, I'll apologize for getting this newsletter out late~ First there was the month long trip to the British Isles in May, then June came with camping and fishing, then summer happened~~~ It happens to all of us during our short summers here in Alaska.

A lot's happened since the last newsletter went out. There was the Juneau Fly-In in February, the AKANA State Meeting in March, the AANA Mid-Year Assembly in Washington, D.C. in April~

The board, officers and other volunteers of the AKANA have been busy meeting with our state and national legislators to further the cause of nurse anesthetists and our practice here in Alaska.

As I've said many times before, it's the volunteers on the committees and the AKANA board of directors that, through their vigilance and hard work, protect our right to practice. This is vital work, and can only be accomplished if members are willing to serve.

And it's easy to serve~there are always openings on committees, which is a great way to get started with very little time commitment. Just e-mail any board member to find out what opportunities are available.

Enjoy your summer!

Wally Upham, CRNA
Editor



PUBLISHING INFORMATION

This newsletter is the official newsletter of the Alaska Association of Nurse Anesthetists and is published twice a year.

This newsletter is meant as a source of information for members of AKANA, students and other interested parties. Articles from readers are encouraged and will be accepted for publication if they have a specific value to AKANA and/or the anesthesia profession.

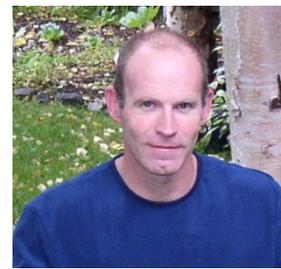
Letters to the Editor are also welcomed and will be printed on a space available basis. All correspondence sent to the Editor must be typed or e-mailed. Contents may be edited without submitter's approval. While being responsive to the readership of the AKANA newsletter, the Editor reserves the right of refusal of letters and articles.

Editorials and letters from readers do not represent the official view or stance of the Alaska Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

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Presidents Update

Jeff Worrell, LtC, USAF (retired), CRNA, MSN
President Alaska Association of Nurse Anesthetists
June 2015



The three most significant events for the association that have occurred since our last newsletter are:

1. APRN statute with language recognizing CRNA's as one of four nationally recognized advanced practice nurses is in the hands of the legislature. The bill has passed the senate and will be in the house the next legislative session.
2. Our annual meeting was held in March in Anchorage.
3. Four members of your association attended the AANA mid-year assembly in Washington D.C.

Chris Logan, our past president, has been your champion working with the APRN alliance in the state to move the APRN language change through the legislature. Senator Cathy Giessel, an advanced practice nurse herself, was the primary sponsor of this bill. Senator Giessel has done a great job with the assistance of the other APRN alliance members in educating the legislators about the impact of this bill. In this current year of austerity, passing legislation that has no significant costs associated with implementation seems like a win for the legislators.

We have had one distraction in this process. Prior to the bill passing the senate, one of the anesthesiologists wrote a letter to Senator Giessel suggesting that anesthesia care provided by CRNA's was somehow inferior to that of an anesthesiologist. I would be happy to share the contents of that letter with you, just email me. Senator Giessel responded quickly and accurately with information about the safety of CRNA practice. I have not written a letter to the

anesthesiologist in question as your president. This has been the single voice of opposition to this process. If there is a problem going forward I will be happy to give a response from the association.

The annual meeting was very well done again thanks to the efforts of Kelly Rygh and Julie Christensen and their supporters. We were privileged to have a nice mix of speakers including the incoming AANA President Juan Quintanta. They covered a variety of contemporary topics. It was also extremely beneficial to have a representative of the NBCRNA board to speak to the changes in the CPC program. The AANA will continue to guide you toward actions you need to take for recertification. The "modules" will not come out until 2016. Pay attention to messages from AANA sent to your inbox. The most up to date information will come from AANA. The AANA is developing a "micro-site" that will be dedicated to recertification.

Wendy Monrad, Sheila Jensen, Nicole Bonfoey, and I attended the midyear assembly in Washington D.C. For the first time that I am aware of we were able to meet in person with all three of our federal legislators. Senator Murkowski has been supportive of CRNA practice issues. We have been in close contact with Senator Sullivan's office since our visit supporting AANA and the VA's position of full practice authority for CRNA's employed by the VA. Senator Sullivan sits on a VA subcommittee. Congressman Young has seemed supportive of APRN issues during our past two visits.

Why does this matter to you? Without full practice authority, the CRNA's will be the

only APRN's in the VA system to practice with some limitation. AANA and your state association work hard every day to protect your practice rights. I want you to be able to perform anesthesia within your level of training and practice to your full practice authority. The Board of Nursing in the state of Alaska is supportive of the APRN legislative effort currently underway. The outcome of the VA issue regarding CRNA's has the potential to undermine all of the work done to date. Please continue to support these efforts.

We polled the participants at this year's state meeting about changing locations. I traveled to Fairbanks in November for one of our board meetings. I met with some of the CRNA's in Fairbanks to get their input on supporting a meeting in Fairbanks. The results of the poll at our state meeting indicated that an overwhelming majority of participants would support a meeting in Fairbanks. The board of the Alaska Association of Nurse Anesthetists endorses this effort. We have already began tentative plans for a state meeting in Fairbanks in 2016. This will certainly increase many of your personal costs to attend the meeting, we understand that. Fairbanks will have local activities during that time, in addition to our meeting, that may encourage you to attend. We have had one other meeting outside Anchorage in Girdwood. The biggest complaint from that meeting was arranging ground transportation to Girdwood. The hotel, meeting space, catering, and speakers were not a problem. I hope you can embrace this potential change and come to Fairbanks next March.

Your incoming board will be Wendy Monrad (President), Dave Kwiatkowski (President Elect), Jessica Jule (Treasurer), Jen Lent (Secretary), Teresa Sellars and Sarah Moore (Directors). They will start

their jobs officially on 1 Sept 2015. There will be a transition board meeting in August

The upcoming AANA annual conference at the end of August will have two representatives from the state association in attendance. Many Holman and Suzanne Maynard will be representing you at this conference. They will be on the lookout for speakers for the spring meeting. If there is a topic you would like to see covered at the state meeting, please get in contact with any board member.

Finally, our website has been updated. If you have not taken a look in a while, please check it out. We welcome any input to changes to the website to make it more appealing. My query of members about having social media links on the website was met with very mixed reviews. Few of you seemed interested in a Facebook link on the website. It was a rare person that expressed an interest in a twitter link. Last, some of you have asked about paying on line for future state meetings. Our webmaster is looking into this. The simplest explanation for why this is currently not available boils down to internet security issues that have to be implemented to handle money.

Thanks for all you do every day to take exceptionally good care of your patients. Have an enjoyable summer. Jeff

Jeff Worrell, Ltc, USAF (retired)
CRNA, MSN
President Alaska Association of Nurse Anesthetists

Education Committee Report

Kelly Rygh, CRNA

Julie Christensen, CRNA

Nicole Bonfoey, CRNA

We would like to extend a big thank you to all to members that attended the 2015 Annual Meeting in March. This year was another year of a large number of attendees and support from our members.

Incoming President of the AANA, Juan Quintana, CRNA provided an informative speech on the business of anesthesia as well as updated the members regarding the new CPC requirements.

Both Mary Wojnakowski, CRNA and Mark Welliver, CRNA discussed evidence based clinical topics relevant to our practice.

We are excited to announce there was a majority vote at the meeting from members to hold the 2016 Annual Meeting in Fairbanks. The board met this Spring and also agreed to support moving the meeting to Fairbanks.

The Education Committee has a newmember, Nicole Bonfoey, CRNA.

Nicole will be organizing and conducting the 2016 Annual Meeting in Fairbanks. Please look for updates from Nicole on the website and email regarding the date and information for the 2016 Annual Meeting.

For the members attending the National AANA Annual Meeting in September, please keep in mind any speakers of interest for our State Annual Meeting 2016. Please send Nicole any information regarding potential speakers in order for her to contact them and invite them to our 2016 meeting.

We appreciate the support of our members. We always welcome requests for topics and speakers to assist in planning the Annual Meetings. All members can play an active role in educating the group.

We look forward to seeing all the members at the 2016 Annual Meeting.

Regards,
The Education Committee

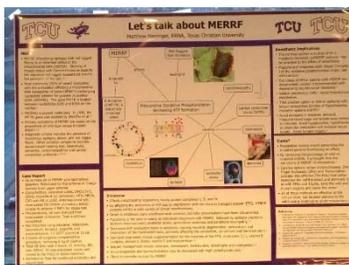
AKANA State Meeting

Anchorage

March 21-22, 2015

Speakers: Jaun Quintana, CRNA, MHS. DNP President-Elect, AANA

Mark Welliver, CRNA, APRN, DNP Kath Jansky, CRNA, MS Mary Wojnakowski, CRNA, PhD



Report from the Juneau Fly-In

Chris Logan, CRNA
Co-Chair, APRN Alliance



The February 2015 Nurse Legislative fly-in was a success. I gave a 45 min lecture on the topic of Citizen Lobbyist to the APRN Alliance meeting in Juneau. It seemed to be well received. We also had a lecture from the Bureau of Vital Statistics on the topic of who can sign death certificates. (It was interesting.)

Our APRN bill, SB 53, was introduced by Senator Cathy Giessel in the senate, so that legislation is on its way. The stars aligned, and the bill made it out of leg-legal and was able to be filed and read across the floor yesterday while we were in attendance. Senator Giessel introduced all of us to the senate, and she gave me the original copy of the senate official business agenda for the day, as a souvenir.

We got our money's worth out of the lobbyists. They did a nice job organizing the legislative day, making all the appointments and making sure folks were where they needed to be.

CRNAs met with Rep Matt Claman, Rep Hughes, Rep Lynn and Sen. Mia Costello, Sen Stoltz, Sen Meyer, and presented the APRN Nurse Practice Act bill information for consideration. The legislation is purely language clean up. It revises 30 year old titles and brings all four advanced practice specialties under the title of APRN. If passed, this will align Alaska with most of the rest of the country, and make it easier for APRNs to get licensed in Alaska and vice versa. This project began 4 years ago with the CRNAs at Alaska Regional not getting paid due to Alaska's designation as "NA" rather than CRNA. At that time we were able to revise the language under regulation with the board of nursing, and since then, both the nurse midwives and the clinical nurse specialist have had the same issue. It

was time to revise the statute to conform to what was being written in regulation. There are no scope of practice changes, it simply makes ANP into APRN and defines the four specialties under that title.

The bill, SB 53 made it through three committees, picked up several cosponsors and passed the Senate before recess. The bill is now in the House committee for labor and commerce. It only requires one hearing and a vote on the floor of the House in order to pass. It would be expected that the governor would sign it. That should all happen early in the next session, January 2016. Stay tuned for advocacy opportunities. Once the bill passes, then the real work begins: revising all of the nursing regulations to conform to current practice and statute.

According to the Juneau gossip chain: Ketchikan's CRNAs joined the nurses union. Sitka is now CRNA only, they let go of their MDA.

Hot medical topics for Alaska: #1 Medicaid expansion- expected to cover and additional 44,000 Alaskans. If implemented, one benefit is that it will cover the DOC (prison) population and greatly decrease the state health care costs. Feds pick up 90% of the tab. Legislators were lukewarm, and there is a well-funded lobbying machine running in opposition to the expansion.

#2 Pharmacists want to be able to give immunizations in pharmacies without MD oversight. School nurses are for this.

#3 Prescription drug monitoring program- will help pharmacists get reimbursed for work that they are now doing for free, such as filling medi-sets; allowing Alaska pharmacists to mail medications to rural residents; ease the burden of unregulated, for-profit, third party audits.

National- there is an attempt to make a 40 hour work week a requirement for employer provided health insurance. Supposedly this would keep employers from giving workers less hours to avoid paying for health insurance. The Alaska Nurses Association is up in arms, rightly so, because most bedside RNs work 36 hrs a week (3x12hr shifts) Lisa Murkowski was in attendance and we spoke to her with the nurses association in the hallway for about 10 minutes about this issue.

That's about it. If you have questions please email me.

Chris Logan, CRNA
Co-Chair, APRN Alliance

PS The history of the APRN Alliance, which I am currently co-chair of, grew out of an Alaska Nursing Action Coalition work group, whose goal was to get all four specialties recognized in Alaska. At that time the Clinical Nurse Specialists were not recognized or authorized. (And could not get paid for their services.) The board of nursing requested that all the advanced practice nurses come together and agree on implementing the Consensus Model. The Alliance is an open work group comprised of the leadership of all the advanced practice groups, the board of nursing, UAA faculty, and other interested parties. We have been working on the language for the bill for the last year, and we are proud that it made it all the way to the legislature. This is an open group that meets for an hour once a month on a Saturday if anyone wants to take part. (We already did all the work, FYI.)



Mid-Year Assembly Report

Jeff Worrell, Ltc, USAF (retired)
CRNA, MSN

President Alaska Association of Nurse Anesthetists

Constituent Visits Matter

After returning from the AANA Mid-Year Assembly I can assure you of one thing, **constituent visits matter to your legislators.** The AANA helps the Alaska Association of Nurse Anesthetists send four members to this meeting by providing Organization Health Association (OHA) funding for our state. Small states, including Alaska, apply for this funding annually.

We spend days in Washington D.C. preparing for a brief meeting with our legislators. The AANA does a remarkable job of providing timely, expert speakers that cover a wide variety of federal legislative issues that affect anesthesia practice and reimbursement. Federal affairs advocacy occurs daily on your behalf by the AANA staff in D.C and by your elected leaders in Chicago. For example, AANA President Pearce attended over 350 meetings so far this year. The D.C. staff members are monitoring activities on the hill daily. You see a frequent summary produced by Frank Purcell, AANA Government Affairs Director.

The speakers at the mid-year assembly walk you through contemporary subjects like:

1. Review of anesthesia practice management
2. Basics of billing an reimbursement
3. Discuss how to build relationships with key stakeholders
4. Impacts of current health insurance marketplace
5. Impact of Affordable Care Act (Obama Care)
6. Describe best practices for members to engage in advocacy
7. Review policy and persuasion in communicating CRNA issues

High paid lobbyists have spoken at this meeting. I often find myself having a cynical view of my personal impact relating to federal health care issues. There was a slide presented by one of the speakers that detailed the types of

communication techniques (letter writing, email, supporting members with money, phone calls...) **the number one type of influence was an in person visit from a constituent.** I have attended mid-year a number of times. This message is persuasive and consistent over time. You, the constituent, are the person that votes and puts the member or keeps the member in office.

The AANA does a remarkable job of walking participants (over 1,000 at this meeting nearly half SRNA's) through the process of bringing contemporary issues to our federal legislators. The staff reviews in details pertinent issues described above. They collate the data into usable salient talking points and give you an opportunity to practice your delivery. There is even time dedicated to on stage presentations of mock meetings with legislators. Our federal legislators have on average 13 meetings each day with a request for 50 meetings. They and their staff receive hundreds of types of communication each day.

We were fortunate to be able to speak in person with each of our three federal legislators. Our visits were brief and to the point. We left the legislators with professional information packets designed by the AANA. One of the packet inserts was the map of CRNA locations in the state. That map could not have been possible without your input. The map the AANA produces is inaccurate, they rely on data from Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS). I have sent them the most current map.

Wendy Monrad, your president elect has already sent a follow up letter to each legislator reviewing the main talking points from our conversations. Thank you for allowing us to represent Alaska CRNA's at a federal level. Jeff

Jeff Worrell, Ltc, USAF (retired)
CRNA, MSN
President Alaska Association of Nurse
Anesthetists

Mid-Year Assembly Report

Wendy Monrad, CRNA

President-Elect, AKANA

Federal Political Director Perspective

What an incredible experience! I have been to the Midyear Assembly twice before but this one was amazing! Over 1000 CRNAs and students present and we were able to sit down with all three of our legislators! This was also our first year to have one of our students join us – thanks to Matt Harringer for coming along!

This year as your President-Elect, my primary responsibility has been Federal Political Director (FPD). It has been a real challenge and frankly at times quite overwhelming. “Politics” has never been a great interest of mine, however, over the last 6 years of being involved in the AKANA board and this year as FPD, I have a great appreciation for those in Washington DC and Illinois serving to protect our profession. I also very much appreciate those serving here on our own state board. The best way to give back to our incredible profession is to show up and serve!

The FPD’s primary responsibility is to facilitate CRNAs in Alaska getting to know our U.S. representative and Senators both at the Midyear Assembly and at home year around. Successful advocacy depends on effective, coordinated effort – and effective, coordinated people. If a federal legislator has an effective and a professional relationship with one or more CRNAs, that legislator is far more likely to see issues affecting our practice and reimbursement from our perspective and support us.

One area we need to work on this year is developing “Key Contacts” with each of our legislators. This person helps to communicate and coordinate

interactions with a legislator here at home. They might stay in touch with legislators and their aids on key issues, following up on questions or on actions they committed to taking. They might be asked to attend a local funder raiser by the AANA, presenting a CRNA PAC contribution to a legislator who has shown interest in our profession and expressed support. We need to develop these relationships. If you are interested in serving in this way, please contact me.

I also wanted to put a plug in for the CRNA PAC. This organization ensures that the voices of CRNAs are heard on Capitol Hill and in federal agencies by 1) legislative advocacy, 2) regulatory advocacy, 3) political advocacy, and 4) grass roots advocacy right here in our state! Our PAC is the largest nursing PAC and is in the top 10 of all Healthcare PACs with \$1.6million in contributions last year. The AANA boasts 48,000 members, 93% of all CRNAs in the U.S. This is amazing! However, only 9% of us contributed to the PAC last year. If each AANA member contributed just \$50, our PAC would grow by \$2.4 million. Who can’t donate \$50 to their profession? If you’re not convinced yet, then volunteer to come to Midyear Assembly next year and get a front row seat to the action!

Bottom line – your voice matters! Who you are and what you do for our patients day in and day out matters.

Wendy Monrad, CRNA

AANA Mid-Year Assembly

Washington, D.C.

April, 2015

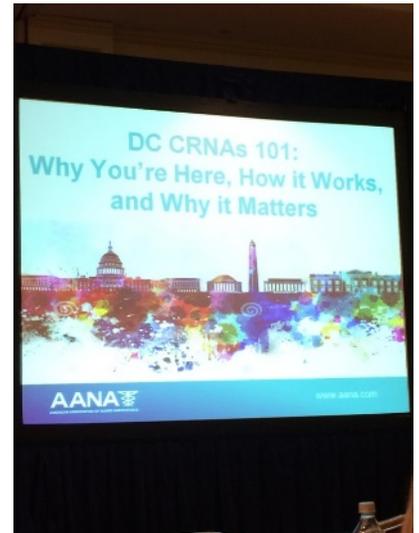
Attended by Jeff Worrell, Wendy Monrad, Shelia Jensen, Nicole Bonfoey, Matt Harringer



AANA Mid-Year Assembly

The fist bump picture was with one of the security police at the Capitol. When we were going through security, he saw my CRNA pin and said "so you're a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist huh?". I was so shocked that the average working joe knew who we were. He agreed to a picture and we traded my pin for his Capitol Police patch.

Awesome! (Wendy)



Check out the AANA's new PR campaign site – Awesome summary of who CRNAs are and our role in the future!

CRNAs
The Future of
Anesthesia Care Today

future-of-anesthesia-care-today.com

Mid-Year Assembly Report

Nicole Bonfoey, CRNA
Board of directors

We had fun listening to speakers talking about things that are interesting and useful. It's also fun to see people I trained with and people that trained with some of my coworkers who found me and took pictures to send home their well wishes. Sheila called these meetings "professional revivals". It surprised me a little bit how many of these same people were at Fall Leadership Conference in Miami two years ago.

In school our class participated in a "day on the hill" where we met our representatives. This was nothing like that. By the time we met Lisa Murkowski Tuesday morning I was ready! We had heard the message we were to spread so many times and in so many ways I couldn't help but spread the word. Fortunately I was with people much more knowledgeable and well spoken than I am so I didn't have to spend all my enthusiasm in

one place. We spent a lot of time talking with Dan Sullivan's staffer Kate prior to our meeting with him. She asked many questions about our issues and our practices. Then finally on Wednesday morning we met Don Young. His S.O., a retired nurse, was present and very excited to meet us. I couldn't believe we met all three of our congressmen personally.

I have a much greater appreciation for the political process and demands on congressmen's time and attention. I have to say I pay a little bit more attention to the news sound bites and emails that come from our elected representatives these days. Thank you for sending me to represent you at Midyear Assembly.

Nicole Bonfoey
Board of directors

Mid-Year Assembly Report

Sheila Jensen, CRNA

A one word summary of this event is "Perfect!" We were able to meet with all 3 of our state representatives, no legal aides! The meetings were a success. We received enthusiastic welcomes from each person we meet with. Our Washington lobbyist, Frank Purcell, surprised us with his presence at our meeting with Senator Murkowski. Undoubtedly his attendance not only made an impression on the Senator, but also assisted us in speaking "Washington-ees".

Senator Sullivan's legal aide is the daughter of an Anchorage pediatric dentist so we made a good connection there. Jeff Worrell shared a professional connection with Senator Sullivan through military service.

Our final meeting, with Don Young, also went well. In the past he has not been very supportive of nurse anesthesia. However,

one of our talking points at this session addressed revision of the Veteran's Affairs handbook to recognize CRNA's as advanced practice nurses. Don Young is a strong advocate for our veterans and seemed interested in expanding the availability of providers to meet their needs.

The other talking points included the pass-through legislation, continued funding for nursing education and a big "thank-you" for passing the sustainable growth rate (SGR) legislation that prevented further cuts to medicare reimbursement.

This report would be incomplete without raving about the beautiful weather! The cherry blossoms were at the end of their bloom but the greenery and flowers were a welcome sight to our Alaskan eyes!

Sheila Jensen, CRNA

AKANA Elections

Elections are complete for our state association. Big thanks to Brian McCorison for taking on our 1st ever electronic voting endeavor.

Here are the names of the board members for 2015-2016. Their term begins 1 September 2015. [Blue Text](#) – officers and board members just elected.

President: Wendy Monrad

President Elect: [Dave Kwiatkowski](#)

Secretary: Jennifer Lent

Treasurer: [Jessica Jule](#)

Directors: [Teresa Sellars & Sarah Moore](#)

Thanks to everyone that took the time to vote.

Jeff Worrell, Ltc, USAF (retired)

CRNA, MSN

President Alaska Association of Nurse Anesthetists

In Memoriam



Rebecca Brandon, CRNA 1941-2015

Anchorage, Alaska, resident Rebecca "Beki" Sue Bandon died peacefully on June 7, 2015, at the age of 74, of natural causes at Providence Hospital, surrounded by her friends. Rebecca was born on April 25, 1941, in Searcy, Ark., to James Walter Brandon Sr. and Mary Agnes Spear Brandon. After attending Mt. Carmel School of Nursing in Pittsburg, Kansas. Rebecca was commissioned as a 2nd Lt. into the U.S. Army Nurse Corp by her father in 1964.

Rebecca accomplished much in her five year military career. She completed basic operating room training at Letterman General Hospital, San Francisco, Calif., and was then assigned to the operating room at Fitzsimons General Hospital in Denver, Colo. This was followed by an assignment to the Vietnam 3rd Field Hospital, Saigon, Vietnam.

Wanting to go back to school, she attended the Nurse Anesthetist School at Temple University in Philadelphia, Penn. Rebecca Brandon worked as a nurse anesthetist and completed 32 years of Federal Service. She spent 12 years at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington D.C., and 20 years at Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage. Not ready to retire completely, Rebecca went on to work for the Anesthesia Associates at Alaska Regional Hospital until August of 2009.

The unrecognized greatness held within us all was what Rebecca demanded from those she guided. It is what she also gave to her career, her country, her art and to those fortunate enough to call her friend. Survivors include her brother, James Jr.; sister-in-law, Margaret Brandon; niece, Rachael; and nephews, Matthew and Kyle. Rebecca Brandon was preceded in death by her life partner, Babetta Veater; and her parents, James Sr. and Mary Brandon.

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AKANA Newsletter

Waldron Upham, CRNA Editor

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