Community Building, Collaboration and Outreach
Get involved in your society today!

By Jeffrey A. Green, MD, MSHA, FASA
VSA President
Vice-Chair, Department of Anesthesiology
VCU Health Systems

In this issue of the newsletter, we stress the importance of involvement in organized medicine. Organized medicine benefits us all in many ways and has a phenomenal record of accomplishment in the United States. Physicians in organized medicine have delivered an amazing record of achievements in healthcare such as the development of standards of practice, codes of ethics, guidelines for medical education and journals containing the results of groundbreaking research. During this current period of enormous upheaval in medicine, we must not lose sight of the accomplishments we have made together and the huge influential role we play in our society.

Physicians were once considered the indisputable authorities on healthcare, and we still can fulfill that role if we vow to stand united and in solidarity. While our opinions were once unchallenged; now we are but one voice among many. While each of us has a role to play with our individual patients, together we increase quality, safety and efficiency, and improve outcomes for all patients. Together, we accomplish what none of us could have done alone. By standing together, united in vision and commitment, we physicians can shape the future healthcare system this country needs.

Anesthesiologists involved in organized medicine bring a wealth of knowledge and experience back to the anesthesia community. We are involved in ASA, MSV, AMA and other prominent medical organizations. We leverage the experience of other leaders to deal with issues we face in our practices. We are not alone in the desire to make medicine better for anesthesiologists and our patients. We have accepted the responsibility to serve in professional organizations to contribute our professional expertise to the healthcare needs of society as a whole. There are commonalities to the issues we face and to the education we must offer to those who don’t understand the unique position of physicians in today’s healthcare environment.

We are also responsible to assess the social, economic and political forces that impinge in many ways upon anesthesia practice and the professional interactions with our patients. Anesthesiologists can and do make a difference in healthcare organizations.

Anesthesiologists involved in organized medicine also network across organizations. At a time when medical practice feels lonely and anesthesiologists face unprecedented rates of burnout and suicide, a professional network to interact with colleagues who are dealing with the same or similar issues is a welcome situation and a chance to stay connected. Organized medicine is an opportunity to build relationships. At a time when anesthesiologists are facing more and more
The VSA Update newsletter is the publication of the Virginia Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc. It is published quarterly. In January, a special annual legislative issue is published. The VSA encourages physicians to submit announcements of changes in professional status including name changes, mergers, retirements, and additions to their groups, as well as notices of illness or death. Anecdotes of experiences with carriers, hospital administration, patient complaints, or risk management issues may be useful to share with your colleagues. Editorial comment in italics may, on occasion, accompany articles. Letters to the editor, news and comments are welcome and should be directed to: Brooke Trainer, MD • brookealbright@gmail.com.

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This year’s one and-a-half day, 11.25 CME/MOCA eligible meeting (February 1 - 2) focuses on current, future and cutting edge themes related to management of painful conditions:

- Military and VA perspectives in Pain management in the Opioid Epidemic,
- Interventional Pain as a Part of a Balanced Non-Opioid Strategy
- Pain and Physician Wellness.

These topics are based on current challenges in the healthcare environment, the priorities and goals for providing optimum care to patients experiencing pain and ensuring that all healthcare providers can navigate these challenges effectively.

The Virginia Pain Society welcomes all healthcare professionals who are engaged in helping patients address challenges in pain management.

Attendance will satisfy VA-DHP/BOM opioid/pain education requirements.

We look forward to seeing you in February.

intrusion by government regulation and restriction on how we practice, the strength-in-numbers unified front in organized medicine provides policymakers with our prescription for healing of the healthcare system using the power of advocacy and negotiation.

One example of the impact of organized medicine is the recent advocacy for balance billing legislation in Virginia. Although bills supported by VSA and MSV ultimately did not advance during the last legislative session, we demonstrated that a coalition of physicians, hospitals and patients speaking with a unified voice could provide a positive influence on this issue.

During the session, the House of Medicine successfully defeated harmful balanced billing legislation that was supported only by the health insurers. In the end, the voice of organized medicine advocating for our patients, was heard loudly by our lawmakers.

Finally, organized medicine serves as a platform from which our leaders in anesthesiology communicate and connect with other anesthesiologists. Organized medicine allows us the opportunity to build communities of anesthesiologists who share much in common with each other. Through the tools that have been developed, leaders can keep members informed about important issues.

Organized medicine acts as a filter to remove all of the noise around us and allows us to stay focused on the priorities in healthcare.

If you would like to become more involved in any aspect of organized medicine including the VSA or MSV, please reach out to your local regional director or to me directly at Jeffrey.green@vcuhealth.org.

One of the best aspects of organized medicine is its inclusiveness; there is always so much to be done and all are welcome to participate. I look forward to hearing from you or meeting you at an upcoming organized medicine event.

Get Involved in Your Society, from page 1
I have plenty of ideas but need your input. I encourage you all to please reach out and contribute your stories, photos, ideas, and content. Let’s work together on building from this strong foundation.

Continued on page 5
Anesthesiology 2020: Residents in a New Decade

By Daniel H. Gouger, MD
Anesthesia Resident, VCU Health Systems
Resident Editor, VSA Update

The end of 2019 not only closes another year, but also marks the transition into a new decade. That creates a unique moment to pause, introspect, and look into the future for our anesthesiology community in the state of Virginia.

This newsletter issue will be dedicated to the House of Medicine, where the cog-and-wheel components of organized medicine and the medical community are explored as it relates to anesthesiology. Residents and trainees are certainly part of that system.

As the new Resident Editor for the VSA Update newsletter, my goal in this first editorial is to introduce myself to our VSA membership, and to define a space where our Virginia anesthesia residents and trainees can share their voices and experiences.

Though I may be new to our state society, I am not new to higher education and organized medicine. Throughout medical school, I completed a five-year specialty track in medical education and organized medicine that focused on health policy, curriculum, and adult teaching and learning. In school, I held multi-year national leadership roles with the American Medical Student Association (AMSA), sat on many societal committees, as well as authored resolutions and served as an organizational delegate.

My undergraduate medical training culminated in a year-long program in government relations and higher education affairs as the AMSA-Kaiser Permanente Education and Advocacy Fellow, where I worked as a society national staff member in Washington, DC. In this role, I honed mass communications skills in press, news, and publications. I also organized legislative summits, authored federal policy briefs, and met with countless elected officials and DC staffers. I’m excited to bring this background and energy to the VSA.

In early September, the Virginia anesthesia residents from VCU and UVA organized a meet-up at Hardywood West Creek with the VSA leadership. A pleasant and well-spent fall afternoon demonstrated that there is a strong pulse of community enthusiasm among the VSA residents.

We discussed resident engagement with state legislative issues, trainee wellness, and desire for attending mentorship in career development and practice management.

We also considered the Virginia academic anesthesia community’s international footprint. We shared experiences with UVA’s multi-site global health leadership track in tropical medicine and health policy, and VCU’s global anesthesia resident exchange program in OB anesthesia and point-of-care ultrasound in Toluca, Mexico. In addition, we planned attendance and inter-program collaboration at national meetings.

Weeks later, the VSA residents (some of whom were ASA Resident Section Delegates), all met again at the 2019 ASA Annual Meeting in Orlando.

As we can see, the VSA resident community holds much promise when we look into 2020 because there’s warmth, camaraderie, and much to share. But as we scale out to 30,000 feet, we see that medical education and healthcare delivery as a whole are changing.

Care has evolved from the biomedical model of disease to also include the social determinants of health and humanism in medicine. Balancing those patient and population-centered themes falls under the umbrella of health systems science. Therefore, the future anesthesiologist training requires increasingly important competencies in leadership, quality improvement, and safety.

All of this is shaped by organized medicine, and entities in The House of Medicine. That underscores why resident involvement is paramount. We also hope that’s what readers can garner from this newsletter issue’s content.

To that end, The Resident’s Corner of the VSA Update newsletter will continue to be a platform for our Virginia anesthesia residents and trainees to reflect, share what they’ve learned, and ask important questions about our dynamic specialty.

New Editor, from page 4

...
For the past three years I have had the pleasure of attending the ASA Annual meeting along with more than 14,000 anesthesiologists. Each year, I leave with more valuable information that I will carry with me on into my career.

This year in Orlando, Florida was another great conference! The Resident and Fellow Section of the ASA had a very robust group of anesthesiologists-in-training who made the trip to participate. From presenting their research and medically challenging cases to participating in House of Delegates meetings and attending lectures, the residents were very involved.

This year’s VSA resident delegation consisted of Drs. Mark Hylton, Elliot Winters, Daniel Gouger, and Alex Skojec.

Dr. Jerome Adams, US Surgeon General and an anesthesiologist, was the conference’s celebrity. I was fortunate to hear him speak on multiple occasions. He surprised the Resident House of Delegates on Sunday morning for a brief presentation along with giving the Rovenstine lecture.

Two things I took away from his lectures:
1. We need to put more health into healthcare because healthcare doesn’t always equal good health, and
2. Who better than an anesthesiologist to fight the opioid epidemic?

We are very privileged to have one of our own as the Nation’s Doctor.

Each year at the ASA Annual Meeting, the Resident and Fellow section develops a track geared towards those attendees. This year’s conference schedule included an Oral Board Preparation lecture, financial advice session for the young physician, multiple social events, a keynote address on physician wellness and burnout by Dr. Michelle Au, as well as a resident leadership workshop.

Various topics were discussed during our House of Delegates including operating room attire, pain medicine prescribing, transition of patient care/structured handoffs, and much more. The hottest topics discussed were the development of a Point-of-Care Ultrasound (POCUS) certification and the development of a State Level Health Policy elective pilot program. Virginia would be a great state to pilot a health policy elective for residents!

Though the ASA Annual Meeting is a very large conference, it was a great experience. Along the backdrop of Disney country, this year’s meeting allowed for excellent discussions, great learning, and connections or reconnections among anesthesiology colleagues nationally and internationally. I encourage all of you to attend this meeting, whether it’s as a delegate, presenter, or attendee. I can guarantee you will leave with new knowledge that you will carry with you throughout your career.

I look forward to seeing many of you next year as we descend upon our Nation’s Capital in early October for another fun and fulfilling Annual Meeting!

Virginia residents at the ASA Annual Meeting in Orlando in October. From left to right: Drs. Elliot Winters, Alex Skojec, Daniel Gouger, and Mark Hylton, Jr.

Resident Reflection on Anesthesiology 2019

By J. Mark Hylton, Jr., MD
Chief Resident, VCU Health Systems

Winchester Regional Meetup Hosted by WAI

By Casey N. Dowling, DO, FASA
Medical Director
Winchester Medical Center
Pre-Op S.T.A.R.T. Clinic

On September 25th the President of the VSA Dr. Jeffery Green, FASA visited Winchester Anesthesiologists Inc. for a dinner meeting.

WAI is based in Winchester and covers anesthesia throughout the northern Shenandoah Valley. Technically, WAI is a part of the Northern Virginia Region. Unfortunately, their location precludes attendance to most events held in that region.

Dr. Green graciously agreed to make a special trip, and 19 of our 32 physicians attended this inaugural event.

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 Winchester residents at the ASA Annual Meeting in Orlando in October. From left to right: Drs. Elliot Winters, Alex Skojec, Daniel Gouger, and Mark Hylton, Jr.

MSV Lobby Day

White Coats on Call

February 4, 2020
7:00 AM - 12:00 PM
The John Marshall Hotel, Richmond

7:00 am.... Registration and Breakfast
7:30 am................Strategy Session
9:00 am-11:00 am ... Legislative Visits

Breakfast will be served
Visit msv.org/lobbyday for details.
For questions, contact Tim Faerber at GovtAffairs@msv.org or call (804) 377-1036
Virginia Highlands Anesthesia in Abingdon

By Mark W. Simcox, MD
President, Virginia Highlands Anesthesia

Virginia Highlands Anesthesia was founded in 1981, by Robert Gilmer, MD. For several years, Dr. Gilmer would be the only anesthesiologist in Abingdon; a position which lended itself to long hours, and often taking call every other night.

It was not until 1986 that Dr. Gilmer would recruit his partner, Kit Grantham MD, into the group. In spite of these long, initial hours, Dr. Gilmer’s approach was one which favored an involvement extending beyond the O.R. He understood the importance of playing an active role in hospital politics, and sought to adopt a hands-on approach within the group.

By the time Dr. Gilmer retired in 2011, he had served as Chief of Staff, Head of Credential Committee, and Chief of Surgery several times. This valuation of administrative involvement would go on to form the foundations of Virginia Highlands Anesthesia, a group in which many others have served in similar capacities.

Several others within the group serve on administrative committees within the hospital. Dr. Kathleen Wild is currently the chairperson of the Credentials Committee for the Hospital. I have been Chief of Surgery twice in my career, as well as served as Chief of Staff. I am currently Vice President of Staff.

Recently, Virginia Highlands Anesthesia consolidated care to include all hospitals within Ballad Health in Virginia – the region’s only healthcare provider – gaining a contract which was previously held by a national anesthesia provider.

Today, we cover all six facilities in the Southwest Virginia region. Opportunities such as this have been made possible through ongoing participation in hospital politics. Where some groups might take a more passive role in the goings-on of hospital administration, at VHA, an approach which favors active self-advocation, as well as continual pursuit of reasonable compromise, has enabled relations between the group and hospital administration to flourish.

It is never “us” and “them” – even in the face of steepest disagreement, it is our belief that all involved in any deal must be treated as members of a partnership, working toward the common goal of providing highest quality healthcare as efficiently as possible.

In order to achieve our goal of a unified team, it is important to us that our staff are active members within the local community, for whom family and friends are as important as life at the hospital.

In hiring quality, community-oriented individuals, we have created a low turn-over rate, and an environment in which all are valued as important members of the practice. In doing so, we are best equipped to provide an unrivaled quality of care to our patients.

Recently, we launched a billboard campaign within the region. Our goal with this is to not only create a public awareness of the group, but to show patients that although we are not competing for their business, we will provide them with the level of care as if we were.

We have allied ourselves with the local community, of which each of is a part, through company-sponsored family events, as well as donations to local schools and charities. In order to earn the trust of our patients, it is important that we retain an active role within community functions.

It is never enough to sit back and watch life unfold through hospital windows – it is our intent to always play the more active role in determining the fate of our group, the hospital, and the community at large.
Why Your Involvement In Advocacy Is Essential

By John Butterworth, IV, MD
Chair, Department of Anesthesiology
VCU Health Systems

The answer to the question posed in the title is very simple. If you don’t advocate for your patients and your profession, who will? You probably wouldn’t want to read about all the misadventures I experienced as a board member and officer in the North Carolina Society of Anesthesiologists (NCSA) and board member of the Indiana Society of Anesthesiologists (ISA), but some of this history will illustrate why we must be involved in advocacy. You likely are already aware of the VSA’s legislative issues and history so I will not cover them here.

There is truth to the idea that the states serve as laboratories for national policy, and there is no question that each state has its own set of issues. Some of the NCSA issues included statewide regulations for Office Based Anesthesia, Scope of Practice, and licensure of Anesthesiologist Assistants.

While I was in Indiana some of the ISA issues included Medicare rules for teaching physicians and the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula for Medicare payments to physicians.

You would no doubt agree that all of these issues are important for patients and our profession, and all would be worthy of your time and attention.

As you would expect, the NCSA’s advocacy efforts focused on the NC General Assembly and the US Congress. We also put in a brief appearance at the NC Court of Appeals in the year that I was NCSA President! That same year the NCSA sponsored two bills before the NC General Assembly. I spent many a post-call and vacation day in Raleigh advocating for them.

The NCSA was ultimately successful with the issues addressed by both bills.

I would ask those who choose not to contribute to the PACs, and who do not want to participate in advocacy, just who they think the legislators, legislative staff, and other government officials will be hearing from if we are absent?

One bill became moot after the NC Court of Appeals ruled in our favor. The other bill sailed through the General Assembly and was signed by the Governor after the two legislators who failed to move the bill out of committee were sent to prison for receiving illegal contributions.

You cannot make this stuff up! In the next few years the ISA had some of the same legislative and administrative priorities as the NCSA and others that were very different. At the federal level, ISA focused on the Medicare “Teaching Rule” and the SGR formula.

Over several months I had weekly correspondence (and eventually conversations) with the chief of staff of my congresswoman (Julia Carson) regarding the Medicare teaching rule. This led directly to her signing on to the bill that ASA supported and that was ultimately passed into law.

When Congresswoman Carson passed away, her successor and grandson (Andre Carson) moved into my neighborhood! Guess who was designated as his ISA “key contact”?

Advocacy sometimes takes strange forms. Manuel Bonilla, ASA’s excellent representative in Washington, once called and asked me what I knew about NASCAR racing. My answer was “more than you can possibly imagine.” That resulted in my wife and my attending on behalf of ASA PAC a prerace gathering and the Brickyard 400 race (20 rows behind the start finish line) with (former) Indiana Congressman Buyer and his family.

Another time, Congressman (and majority leader) Steny Hoyer came to Indianapolis to speak at a fund raiser luncheon on behalf of an Indiana congressional candidate. Manny Bonilla and ASA PAC sent me to the luncheon with instructions to spend 90 seconds thanking Congressman Hoyer for his support on the Teaching Rule bill!

Here in Virginia, my main involvement with advocacy has been with the Richmond Academy of Medicine and Medical Society of Virginia. Some of the issues that MSV has dealt with over the past few years include opioid prescribing, scope of practice, Lyme disease (don’t ask!), maintenance of certification, Certificate of Public Need, and Medicaid Expansion.

Advocacy is part of professionalism; it’s the responsibility of all of us, not just a few zealots. Unfortunately, there are some physicians that see advocacy as somebody else’s problem or as beneath their dignity. Some will say that contributing to the VSA, ASA, and/or MSV PACs (I suggest that you give to all of them) only contributes to the problem.

I would ask those who choose not to contribute to the PACs, and who do not want to participate in advocacy, just who they think the legislators, legislative staff, and other government officials will be hearing from if we are absent?

Our patients and our profession are depending on us to do our part.
Anesthesiology 2019 Annual Meeting
From a New Attendee’s Perspective

By Fatoumata Kromah, MD
VCU Health Systems

I am honored to present my experience at the Anesthesiology Annual Meeting organized by American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA). The meeting was held October 19 - 23 2019. The Annual Meeting is an event that brings together anesthesiologists from around the world to share knowledge and discuss advancements in the field.

This year, an estimated 14,000 clinicians traveled from countries abroad and within the United States to the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. The warm and sunny weather made for a pleasant meeting despite the large meeting space. Having an umbrella or comfortable walking shoes was a must!

Understanding the complimentary shuttle service, being prepared to walk to venues in the area, or planning for personal transportation is crucial to getting from one event to the other in a timely fashion. I found it especially useful to create a personalized schedule with the ASA meeting app.

While I have attended the Annual ASA Meeting as a resident physician and attending anesthesiologist, my perspective has significantly changed over the years. Given the timing and proximity of the meeting this year, I found the ASA Annual Meeting to be a baby and family friendly meeting. I was pleasantly surprised by the private and complimentary Mother’s Room and the Family Lounge.

_A Day in the Life of an Anesthesiologist_ was an interesting workshop specifically geared towards kids, and was an excellent addition. Also, there were plenty of activities for all ages at the theme parks in Orlando.

Educational events

In evaluating my own personal experience after attending the Annual Meeting, I realized that some things have remained the same. Every year that I have attended the ASA, there was a substantial value to be gained for the general anesthesiology practitioner or subspecialties focused individual within the field regardless of career stage.

The Annual Meeting offered a variety of great sessions and clinical tracks, hands-on workshops, Problem-Based Learning Discussions and seminars. Many VSA members were actively involved, to varying degrees, as presenters or moderators of Medically Challenging Cases, panels and/or sessions listed below.

**Session Type**

- 120 Minute Panel
- 60 Minute Panel
- 60 Minute Refresher Course Lecture
- Abstract Group Discussions
- Cadaver Workshops
- Caucus Meetings
- Clinical Forum
- Committee and Editorial Board Meetings
- eAbstracts
- Featured Abstracts
- Hands-on Workshop
- Interactive Tutorial
- Medically Challenging Cases
- Medical Student Sessions
- Oral Presentations
- Point-Counterpoint
- Problem-Based Learning Discussions

MSV Annual Meeting Recap

By Marie Sankaran-Raval, MD
VCU Health Systems

The 2019 Medical Society of Virginia Annual Meeting was held October 18 - 20 at the Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Virginia.

Secretary Daniel Carey addressed the House of Delegates in the first session, touching on issues that he and Governor Northam have been working on throughout this year.

Three legislative policies he addressed were Medicaid Expansion, Bed of last resort and Certificate of Public Need. Secretary Carey stressed that physician leadership and advocacy are essential to the delivery of patient care and the healthcare system.

Educational sessions were widely attended and covered two specific topics that affect physicians every day, critical conversations with physicians and opioid addiction. Clifford Deal III, MD was installed as President and the MSV Foundation Gala was a sold out event. He highlighted issues that he intends to tackle in the 2020 General Assembly, namely Medicaid Expansion and the elimination of “surprise billing.”

The meeting concluded with the House of Delegates passing multiple resolutions regarding maintenance of certification (MOC), stopping robocalls, limiting direct consumer advertising of prescription drugs and other important issues.

Next year’s meeting will take place on October 9 - 11, 2020 at the Homestead Resort.

The Medical Society of Virginia was founded in 1820 and will celebrate its 200th Anniversary in the coming year. MSV represents over 30,000 medical professionals in the Commonwealth of Virginia and has been a successful legislative voice for not only us as physicians but also the patients we serve.
Additional fees were required for the following sessions

- Brain Health Sessions
- Ethics Sessions
- FAER Sessions
- Leadership Development Sessions
- Practice Management Sessions
- Research Sessions
- Recommended Sessions for Residents
- UGRA Sessions
- Trauma Sessions
- Team-based Perioperative Coordinated Care

In addition to lectures, interactive discussions and small group breakouts, there were plenty of educational self-study stations. The Self-Study Program allowed further opportunities to maximize continued medical education credits. There were sessions on Opioid Analgesics for REMS credit, ABA MOCA Part 2 Patient Safety and Part 4 Sessions. I was especially pleased with the adaptation of a more sophisticated credit claiming system. An attendance of at least 15 minutes automatically added the session credit to the attendee once an online evaluation form is completed by December 31, 2019.

Point-counterpoint sessions resulted in great debates focused on critical appraisal of the literature, interpretation of the science, and research in anesthesia. Despite the great discussions and noted advancements in anesthesiology, these sessions often led to the conclusion that more research is needed to improve health and patient care.

There was an interesting pro and con debate about epidural versus interfascial plane blocks for major abdominal surgery. The arguments evolved around the question of thoracic epidurals consideration as the gold standard of care for post op abdominal surgery analgesia.

I noted a very intriguing research discussion highlighting the risks of ketamine use as an opioid alternative. An inspirational research topic that I found useful in improving my clinical practice showed that nitrous oxide labor analgesia did not prevent women in labor from requesting other pain management options.

There were insightful previews of results for late-breaking clinical research. There were studies on medical marijuana, research discussion about the importance of an opioid-free technique for tonsillectomy. Experts discussed perioperative brain health and ways to prevent and treat postoperative delirium in the elderly patient population.

The meeting this year featured abstracts and networking at the Research Central area that included a Research Lounge. FAER, a non-profit, related organization of the ASA, hosted a Celebration of Research, a full day science session for new researchers - Early-stage Anesthesiology Scholars.

Other highlights of the meeting included the following thought-provoking lectures and speeches from award recipients:

1. Keynote Address by Dr. Verghese focusing on “Physician-Patient Interaction and How Technology Shapes This Interaction, With Both Opportunities and Challenges”.
2. The Gertie Marx lecture presented by Dr. Lawrence Tsen on “Obstetric Anesthesia: Are We There Yet?”
3. Distinguished service award recipient winner APSF Dr. Mark Warner.
4. Other awards included the Presidential Scholar Award, Excellence in Research, Global Humanitarian Award and James E. Cottrell Presidential Scholar Award
5. Dr. Jerome Adams, the first physician anesthesiologist to serve as the United States as Surgeon General, presented the Rovenstine lecture about “The Future of the Physician Anesthesiologist”. He reminded us that anesthesiologists are physician and not proceduralist and our...
important role in prevention of opioid misuse, community health and economic prosperity.

There were plaques recognizing ASA Distinguished Educators, and our very own VSA president Dr. Jeff Green was one of the few nationwide individuals honored.

**Mentoring and leadership**

The Society is celebrating three consecutive female ASA presidents: Drs. Linda J. Mason, Mary Dale Peterson and Beverly K. Philip.

The ASA is experiencing an unprecedented history and there is a growing inclusion of diversity within the society. There was a tremendous amount of support for women in anesthesiology, young anesthesiologists, and underrepresented groups. Two VSA members and energetic leaders in our specialty, Drs. Alice Coombs and John Butterworth, took center stage to address intersectionality in an educational forum. Participants received leadership advice, assessment tools and gained insight about practical ways of seeking career mentorship as well as sponsorship.

There was a variety of other workshops and leadership development training to acquire new skills and obtain excellent clinical pearls. Although I did not personally attend all of these sessions, the leadership workshops and sessions were designed to bridge the gap between medical school and clinical practice in complex healthcare environments.

They focused on OR management/efficiency and how it translates to clinical productivity, billing for anesthesiology services, team-building, risk management, legislative issues and advocacy, strategic planning, and financial statements.

**Other Activities**

For those who were limited on time, a Smart Stage was created for short review of the top 12 medically challenging cases and presentations on current research and innovations. I also noticed many bestselling anesthesiology books and supplementary learning programs such as ACE and SEE 2020 available for purchase at a discounted price.

For non-members, obtaining an ASA membership at the annual meeting was cheaper and incentivized with gifts. ASA members received free gifts, a member pin and complimentary professional headshots. For those who enjoy free gifts, there were daily giveaways of exciting travel destination packages and an Amazon Echo Plus at the Exhibit Hall. Prizes were awarded for correct answers of daily trivia questions, and best selfie posting. The opening reception and free lunches also took place at the exhibit hall.

Navigating through the exhibit hall was an excellent way of exploring the latest innovative equipment and simulation tools, engaging with representatives from 300+ companies, and viewing demos.

The opportunities for networking are an exceptional benefit of attending the ASA annual meeting. Residents and medical students enjoyed a welcome reception, Meet and Greet with Residency Programs, and Fellowship Open House. Employment opportunities and career advancement advice were discussed at the Career Fair.

**Legislative Affairs and Advocacy**

This is where I spent the bulk of my time, resources and energy. As mentioned above, attending the annual meeting requires planning and determination of important goals. Otherwise, one can easily get lost in the massive and overwhelming list of things to do.

One should have at least three top answers for what matters the most. If preserving the future of anesthesiology and that of our patients is high on your list then active involvement or supporting ASA Grassroots is something to consider.

Several members of the VSA delegation were in attendance at the HOD meetings. We learned about upcoming ASA policies, state issues and volunteered our time at the reference committees’ hearings. To no one’s surprise, advocacy for patient safety, compassionate patient care and interactions, protecting patients from surprise medical bills, and surgical caps were hot topics.

Even though there were discussions of a small dues increase, I learned that the ASA charitable foundation, Global Scholars Program, and ASA Policy Research Rotation, both support resident education and experience. Medical students and residents also have leadership training opportunities at Medical Student and Resident Component House of Delegates sessions.

If planning to attend the ASA annual meeting for the first time, I highly recommend stopping by the ASA Advocacy Booth and finding out ways to get involved. The opportunities range from minimal efforts, such as donations to the ASA PAC, FAER, Run/Walk for the Warrior.

The Run/Walk For the Warrior honors and supports service members and Veterans. This year I learned that the ASA also supports the host city by donating to the local charity. For instance, they donated school supplies for kids in need in central Florida through the Gift for Teaching charity. Every $1 you donate was matched with $10 worth of school supplies for students.

**Connections**

The annual meeting is always a great time of the year for me to connect with my friends, former classmates, mentors, and colleagues. This year, I was able to include my family in the annual event, making it even more special for us. I look forward to our department’s reception where we often have former residents in attendance.

The VSA luncheon and reception are always good times to meet candidates running for office, ask them questions and catch up with regional VSA members while enjoying good food and drinks. The medical students and residents turn out at these ASA events is a wonderful demonstration of their...
By Lauren Schmitt  
Commonwealth Strategy Group

The Democrats took the majority in both the Senate and House of Delegates and now control both the legislative and executive branches for the first time in 23 years.

In the House of Delegates, the Democrats picked up six seats, so it is now 55 Democrats and 45 Republicans. In the Senate, the composition is now 21 Democrats and 19 Republicans.

With Democrats in control of the General Assembly and a unified government under Democratic Governor Ralph Northam, we can formulate predictions on the policy areas that the new majority party will prioritize.

Healthcare will remain a top issue, as Virginia continues implementation of Medicaid expansion and its benefits, costs and work requirements. Healthcare access, coverage and cost will also be at the forefront.

Other hot button issues likely to be tackled by the new majority include gun control, abortion rights, LGBT protections, ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, and pro-labor measures such as increasing the minimum wage and reconsidering Virginia’s right-to-work laws that restrict union membership and dues.

New Leadership and Committee Chairs

The House Democratic Caucus elected Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn as their speaker-designee. She will be both the first woman and the first Jewish Speaker of the House in Virginia. Senator Dick Saslaw will serve as the majority leader in the Senate. They have announced new committee chairs, but have not announced committee assignments.

Read below for a full list of leadership positions and committee chairs.

Leadership Positions and Committee Chairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Assigned to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker of the House (designee)</td>
<td>Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Majority Leader</td>
<td>Delegate Charniele Herring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Democratic Caucus Chair</td>
<td>Delegate Rip Sullivan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Democratic Caucus Co-Wips</td>
<td>Delegate Mike Mullin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delegate Alfonso Lopez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate Majority Leader</td>
<td>Senator Dick Saslaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate Democratic Caucus Chair</td>
<td>Senator Mamie Locke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate President Pro-Tempore</td>
<td>Senator Louise Lucas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

House of Delegates Committee Chairs:

- Agriculture .................................................... Delegate Ken Plum
- Appropriations ........................................... Delegate Luke Torian
- Commerce and Labor ....................................... Delegate Jeion Ward
- Counties, Cities & Towns ............................ Delegate Kaye Kory
- Courts of Justice ........................................ Delegate Charniele Herring
- Education .................................................. Delegate Roslyn Tyler
- Finance ...................................................... Delegate Vivian Watts
- General Laws .............................................. Delegate David Bulova
- Health, Welfare and Institutions ............... Delegate Mark Sickles
- Militia, Police and Public Safety ..........  Delegate Patrick Hope
- Privileges and Elections ......................... Delegate Joe Lindsey
- Rules ........................................................ Delegate Janet Howell
- Rehabilitation & Social Services ............ Senator Barbara Favola
- Secretaries ............................................... Senator George Barker
- Local Government .................................... Senator Lynwood Lewis
- Transportation ....................................... Senator Dave Marsden
- Privileges & Elections: .............................. Senator Creigh Deeds

Senate Committee Chairs:

- Agriculture ................................................. Senator Chap Petersen
- Commerce & Labor ....................................... Senator Dick Saslaw
- Courts of Justice ..................................... Senator John Edwards
- Education & Health ..................................... Senator Louise Lucas
- Finance ........................................................ Senator Janet Howell
- Rules ........................................................ Senator Mamie Locke
- Rehabilitation & Social Services ............ Senator Barbara Favola
- General Laws .............................................. Senator George Barker
- Local Government .................................... Senator Lynwood Lewis
- Transportation ....................................... Senator Dave Marsden
- Privileges & Elections: .............................. Senator Creigh Deeds

Encourage Your Practice Administrators to Join VSA

The VSA encourages your practice administrators to join! We have two options:

1. **If 90% or more of a group’s physician anesthesiologists are VSA Active members in good standing and all members will be on a single group bill, the annual dues are FREE.**

2. **If less than 90% of a group’s physician anesthesiologists are ASA Active members in good standing, or the group does not participate in group dues billing, the annual dues are $75.00**

To have your practice administrator join, go to: [https://www.asahq.org/member-center/join-asa/educational](https://www.asahq.org/member-center/join-asa/educational)

- On this page, click on the category you’re interested in – in this case, its: Anesthesia Practice Administrators and Executives – Educational Member
- Click on the + sign next to the title
- The box that opens, will contain full details and the membership rate(s)
Association of Veterans Affairs Anesthesiologists Annual Meeting Recap

By Khurram Ghori, MD
Anesthesiologist, Hunter Holmes McGuire VAMC, Richmond VA

The Association of Veterans Affairs Anesthesiologists (AVAA) 2019 Annual Meeting was held October 18-19 during the ASA in the city of happiness, Orlando FL.

The AVAA is an independent organization founded in 1991 by anesthesiologists interested in ensuring the highest level of anesthesia care possible for our veterans.

The AVAA leadership works closely with senior leadership in the Veterans Health Administration to provide consultation and guidance to folks in the National Anesthesia Service office on all matters regarding the practice of anesthesia.

Three of the 170 national VA medical facilities are located in the state of Virginia, with Richmond being the 49th largest medical center nationally.

VSA members were among those who attended and enjoyed joint CME activities arranged by AVAA in collaboration with Uniformed Services Society of Anesthesiologists (USSA).

During this joint meeting, participants visited the brand new state-of-the-art VA facility at Lake Nona, where a day of simulation courses, cadaver workshops, and live didactic presentations were part of the daylong course.

That evening, members were all invited to a social event at “Top Golf”, a friendly competitive golf driving range for all skill levels, which included food and drinks in a climate-controlled fun environment.

The following day, participants were invited to attend the AVAA Annual Meeting and social dinner at Cuba Libre restaurant. There, attendees had the opportunity to hear from distinguished guests such as Dr. Jerome Adams, Surgeon General of the United States, on the innovative efforts designed by government to improve our healthcare system.

ASA President Linda Mason, and President-Elect Mary Dale Peterson joined the festivities and addressed the importance of member participation in shaping the legislation to improve patient outcomes.

Dr. Sum Ping and Doug Rotter, JD from the VA Central Office were both recognized with awards for their countless years of dedicated service to VA anesthesiologists.

The night concluded with elections of new AVAA officers: Dr. Paul Tan was elected Vice President of the AVAA, and VSA’s own Brooke Trainer, MD was elected as President-Elect.

Sessions of group pictures, meet and greet, social networking, and CME activities continued for four days during the ASA. Next year, AVAA and USAA meetings will be held again during the ASA in Washington DC, October 3, 2020.

All VSA members are cordially invited to join us in the nation’s capital for next year’s annual meeting!

Summary

I usually leave the conference feeling exhausted and at the same time mentally stimulated. The Annual Meeting is always worth it and I look forward to returning to work with new ideas on how we can improve patient health. I know it is not too early to plan ahead and take advantage of all there is to learn at ANESTHESIOLOGY 2020 being held on October 3-7 in Washington, D.C.

Hope to see you in D.C.!
“Most Important Lesson”

By Anja Miller
MS4, University of Virginia School of Medicine

My patient is mom.
Baby’s presence is known.
If not by the excitement
in the air,
By mom’s gravid belly.

Doc asks the nurse
for fentanyl
for her epidural,
He grabs the vial.
Without looking at the vial,
he turns to me, whispering,
“They’re always right. But
trust no one.”

We look down,
The vial reads ephedrine.
Thank God for faith,
but also for doubt.

Members in the News

Katherine Hanback Johnson, MD
Elected WAI President

Winchester Anesthesiologists, Incorporated elected a new President. Katherine Hanback Johnson, MD became the group’s first female president in its almost 50-year history.

Dr. Katherine Hanback Johnson is a native of Winchester, Virginia. As the youngest child of a busy general surgeon, she didn’t always know that she wanted a career in medicine. Rather, she obtained a degree in Management with a minor in Economics from James Madison University in 1994. Dr. Johnson worked in the business sector for five years but soon realized that she could not ignore her true calling. She thus returned to JMU for special premedical studies.

Dr. Johnson obtained her medical degree and training in Anesthesiology at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine in Richmond, Virginia. Upon completion, Dr. Johnson returned to her roots, moved to back Winchester, and joined WAI in 2009. Dr. Johnson’s experience in business has been an invaluable asset to this group. She was quickly made a part of its executive committee and has served as the group’s Vice President since 2014.

In August of this year, Dr. Johnson was promoted to President of Winchester Anesthesiologists, Incorporated. Congratulations Winchester Anesthesiologists, Inc. for your new leadership. Congratulations Dr. Katherine Johnson on this professional achievement.

VSA Central Region Reception

By Michael A. Fowler, MD, MBA
VSA Regional Director
Program Director, Department of Anesthesiology, VCU Health Systems

A reception was held on September 28, 2019 for the Central Region at Dogtown Brewery.

There was a nice turnout from the membership to meet and socialize with other members and some of the VSA leadership. Drs. Jeff Green (President), Marie Sankaran-Raval, Mike Fowler (Regional Director) and Brooke Trainer (Newsletter Editor) were there to meet with members and discuss any issues, as well as provide updates on any upcoming concerns that we anticipate being addressed by our legislature.

We were fortunate to have great weather to enjoy the views from the rooftop of Dogtown Brewery. This was the third consecutive year holding our reception at a rooftop establishment in Richmond and having favorable weather.

We look forward to next year’s reception and encourage all members to be on the lookout for the invitation for their region’s gathering. It is a great time to meet other members and get to know some of our leadership.
Welcome New Members

ACTIVE
Rehaan M. Ahsan, MD ...................... Culpeper
Jessica Al-Mashat, MD ................... Fredericksburg
Mary M. Bailey, MD ..................... Winchester
Claudiu E. Bene ................................ Yorktown
Anne M. Bielamowicz, MD .............. McLean
Jessica C. Bright, MD .................... APO, AE
Kathryn S. Buschon, MD .................. Washington
John J. Bunker, MD ...................... Hagerstown
Matthew Burt, MD ...................... Washington
Matthew P. Caldwell, MD .............. Salem
Brent Carter, DO .......................... Roanoke
Kathleen Chan, MD ..................... Norfolk
Carina P. Cheung, DO ................... Vienna
Clifford V. Cutchins, MD .............. VA Beach
William M. Eby .......................... Richmond
Christopher Edwards, MD .............. Cabin John
Jonathan P. Eskander, MD .............. New Orleans, LA
Eric M. Faden, MD ...................... Alexandria
Andrew T. Heinle, MD ................... Alexandria
Ryan W. Hill, MD, DABA ................ Alexandria
Ernest J. Hoefner, DO .................... Roanoke
Michael Horn, MD ...................... Silver Spring, MD
Michael R. Kaziour, MD ............... Richmond
Benjamin Kornblatt, DO ............... Penn Laird
Thomas P. Krupica, MD ......... Stephen F. Trach, MD
Neha Kumar, MD ....................... Arlington
Cassie B. Lam, MD ...................... Yorktown
Hoyon Lee, MD ......................... Yorktown
William C. Manson, MD .............. Charlottetown
Andrea W. Martineau, MD ............ Norfolk
James A. McGowan, MD .............. Charlottetown
Jason B. McGrady, DO ................. Rockingham
John S. McNeil, MD .................... Charlottetown
Brandon H. Mitchell, MD .......... Montgomery, AL
Caroline Morris, MD .................. Virginia Beach
Jason E. Morris, MD ................. Virginia Beach
Daniel Moy, MD .......................... Washington, DC
Wasef K. Muzaffar, MD .............. Alexandria
Katherine Naidu, MD ................. Oakland
Sean M. Neal, MD ..................... Winchester
Ruth Neary BS, MD .................... Baltimore
Kelly A. Ortega, MD .................. Franklin
Laura H. Park, MD ..................... Arlington
Purav Patel, MD ....................... Lynchburg
Jason D. Poirier, MD ................. Fredericksburg
Jennifer D. Pukish, MD .............. Washington
Timothy P. Rohman, MD ............. Midlothian
Spencer K. Russell, MD .............. Stephenson
Elizabeth A. Russo-Stringer, MD .... Roanoke
Victor S. Saxena, MD ............... Virginia Beach
Jaydeep S. Shah, MD ............... Glen Allen
Kyle B. Smith, MD ...................... Nashville
Alan B. Swinger, DO .................... Toano
Jordan H. Talley, DO, MSC .......... Stephenson
Michael S. Thompson, DO .......... Roanoke
Claudia H. Viens, MD, FRCP .. Winchester
Zao C. Vu, MD .......................... McLean
Joseph D. Walsh, MD, PhD .......... Virginia Beach
Xueyuan S. Wang, MD .......... Falls Church
Andrew M. Winn, MD .............. Roanoke
Sarah A. Witt, MD ...................... Chesapeake
Michael R Ziegler, MD .............. Augusta, GA

AFFILIATE
Lynn H. Bichajian, MD ............ Charlottesville
Jacob Raphael, MD ................. Charlottesville

RESIDENT
Charles G. Boland, MD ............ Fairfax Station
Viachaslau Koushyk, MD .......... Jacksonville
Jiali D. Li, MD ....................... Richmond
Phillip A. Nye, MD .................... Norfolk
Colleen M. O’Connor, MD .......... Charlottesville
Swati Nal, MBBS .................. Glen Allen
Tara R. Secor .......................... Litz, PA
William R. Shannon, MD ....... Norfolk

RETIRED
Charles G. Battig, MD, FACA ...... Charlottesville
Frederick A. Campos, MD .......... Lovettsville
Amr H. ElMahdy, MD .............. Alexandria
Apolonia E. Estilo, MD .......... McLean
Ennio Gallozo, MD, FACA ......... Alexandria
Mary Ann S. Gravenstein, MD ..... Norfolk
Francis B. Haber, MD, FACA .... Boones Mill
Krishna D. Joseph, MD .......... Great Falls
Panos M. Midis, MD .......... Richmond
Maud J. Peereboom, MD .......... Fairfax
Carlos Torres, MD, FACA ........ McLean
John C. Vitaliti, MD .......... Xenia, OH
Stephan J. Wittmann, MD ......... Herndon

STUDENT
Stephan J. Wittmann, MD .......... Herndon
Zachary C. Aflrin ..................... Herndon
Luca Aliaia ........................... Washington
Khizar M. Ashar ........................ Folsom
Kristin Baird ............................ Warrenton
Gabriel Beluchukwu ................. Richmand
Brian Brenner .......................... Charlottesville
John E. Brock, DDS ............... Charleston
Katie Brown, BS, CPC .............. Richmond
Carissa Michele Burke ............... Portland
Scott Cabaniss ........................... Yorktown
Lucas Chambers ........................ Charlottesville
Albert Chang .......................... Blackburg
Christopher Chihoun ........................ Blackburg
Tyler Cook .......................... Blacksburg
Joshua Taylor Coons, MD ......... Norfolk
Michael Wesley Fetts, MD .... Chesterfield
Stephen Ford New ..................... Tazewell
Mary Rose Gaylor, BS .............. Norfolk
Benjamin C. Genovese ........................ Charlottesville
Jacy Gressen ....................... Norfolk
Jim Min Han ................................ Alexandria
Hunter Jaymes Hicks ................ Abingdon
Hanyang Kevin Hong, RN, BSC, BS .......... Richmond
Mitchell R. Horton ..................... Newport News
Hannah M. Jordan ...................... White Pine
Krista Kennedy, BA .................... Charlottesville
Tessa Marie Klump ................. Charlottesville
Chris Lee .............................. Richmond
Christina Lee ........................... Blacksburg
Nitisha Lotun .......................... Charlottesville
Christine L. Mack, MBA, CPC, CMEP .... Richmond
Julie Marilakis-Helms, BSN ........ Chesapeake
Samantha Mathiagaran .............. Richmond
Anna Julia Miller ...................... Charlottesville
John T. Morgan .......................... Charlottesville
Brandon T. Nave ...................... Christiansburg
Jin Woo Park ....................... McLean
Hari Virendra Patel ................ Norfolk
Darren Patel ............................ Blacksburg
Noah D. Pavlisko, DVM, BS, MS .... Blacksburg
Dat Hung Pham ..................... Perry Hall
Aliya Placeres ....................... Blacksburg
Elizabeth Pogrebniak ............... Norfolk
Jordan Summer Pogu ................ Richmond
Tony Rizk, BS ......................... Abingdon
Navdeep S. Sandhu, DDS .......... Chantilly
Matthew Saunders .................... Norfolk
Jayne Slocum .......................... Virginia Beach
Chunzi Song ......................... Charlottesville
Stephen Su .......................... Blacksburg
Jonathan Tran ....................... Blacksburg
Alexander Varzari ............... Norfolk
Megha Vipani .......................... Charlottesville
Andrew Voelgel ........................ Charlottesville
Emily Wang ......................... Norfolk
Sylvia Warner ......................... Richmond
Joseph R. Williams ..................... Irwin
Judith L. Wood ....................... Haymarket
Kalissa Zhang ...................... Richmond

SAVE THE DATE

VSA Luncheon and Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 3, 2020 • Washington, DC
SAVE THE DATE FOR

VSA’s Annual Membership Meeting & Legislative Dinner

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

Sam Miller’s
1212 E. Cary St, Richmond, VA 23219

5:00 pm....................Membership Meeting
6:30 pm.....................Dinner with Legislators

Join us for a great meal, hear the latest about VSA and ASA business, and talk with your legislators about issues important to you and the practice of anesthesiology. It’s FREE for members, and transportation is available.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Angela Puryear at angela@societyhq.com.