

President's Message

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

By the time you read this, I am afraid that summer will be beginning to arrange its departure into fall. I like summer. I like being able to do things with my children late into the day and over the weekend, without the pressures of homework, school projects, soccer, etc. Boston and the surrounding environs really empty out, making the work commute as well as most activities a lot easier than when everyone is back in town. Yet, probably like you, summer is our busiest time at work, and the workload is compounded by colleagues' summer vacations. At times I think that prolonged exposure to the American school calendar---summers off---ruined me: It permanently etched in my soul the expectation for that day in June when the screen door seems to slam behind you on the way out and not to close with you back inside until the start of school. Of course, every year when September comes it hasn't happened and I feel somehow cheated; like the Cubs (or until recently Red Sox) fan, maybe next year will be the year.

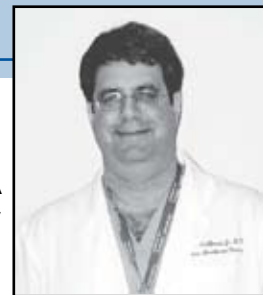
Various SPA groups and committees have been pretty busy over the past several months. Our overall goal continues to be the recognized voice for perioperative pediatric patients and those who care for them, and to maximize the value of SPA membership. We had a very successful (record attendance, abstract submissions, and attendee reviews) winter meeting in Sanibel, FL. The program and plans for the annual meeting in Chicago are complete, and those for the next winter meeting in Phoenix close to the same. If you have not yet done so, please visit the SPA website for meeting and registration information---we'd love to see as many members as possible in Chicago in October and Phoenix in March, 2007. Please also take a look at the new web-based CME (free to SPA members). Our goal is to provide 1-2 credit hours per month of useful, clinically relevant CME on the web.

You should also be aware of the upcoming SPA Officer and Board of Director elections, which will also be conducted by email (specific information has been sent to you by email). Please note that it is imperative that the SPA office always have your correct email address, as we have shifted many important communications to this modality (saving fairly enormous printing and mailing costs).

The growth of the Congenital Cardiac Anesthesia Society (CCAS) has been particularly rewarding; there are now well over 150 individual members and nearly a dozen founding member departments or institutions. Plans are well underway for a one-day CCAS meeting at the beginning (on Thursday, March 8) of the 2007 winter SPA meeting. CCAS information, membership application, etc. can be found on the website.

The Finance Committee continues to work diligently to control expenses and manage SPA resources. In addition,

they are hard at work developing a capital fundraising campaign; the goal is to endow the SPA mission and activities in order to be able to expand education, research, and advocacy abilities (and lessen dependence on outside financial support).



The Communications Committee and newsletter staff continue to do an outstanding job on the quarterly editions of this newsletter, as well as making steady improvements and updates on the website.

SPA members have participated with members of the FAER Pediatric Research Council to develop a FAER RFP (request for proposal) for pediatric anesthesia (detailed information on the website); others have worked with members of the ASA Committee on Pediatric Anesthesia to design the content of the Pediatric Anesthesia Track at the ASA Annual Meeting. Separate groups of SPA members have created pediatric anesthesia content and curriculum guidelines for resident and fellow trainees. A large and diverse group of members has made substantial progress toward developing a multi-institutional platform for outcome and quality assessment; SPA's goal is to deliver and support a consensus-validated program that members can use to meet QA/QI requirements in their own institutions and regulatory environments. The Research Committee is considering concrete ways to further teach and conduct pediatric anesthesia research, and will be exploring the possibility of an SPA-sponsored, multi-institutional pediatric anesthesia research training grant.

Well, that's a brief, thumbnail summary of some of the projects in which our members have been engaged. It continues to be a privilege and an honor for me to be able to participate in these efforts. We continue to need your input about activities and offerings that you need, and your hard work on the one(s) that particularly interest you. I strongly encourage you to contact me or any other member of the organization with suggestions, to find out more about any of these activities, and (I hope) to offer to work on one or more of them. I also hope that you get to spend a little more time outside the screen door doing other things that you care about before it is time to come back in.

With warm regards,
Frank McGowan