

JRheum and the CRA: A Slam Dunk

By Dr. Gunnar Kraag, CRA President, 2006-2008

I have been asked along with other Past-Presidents of the CRA to provide some brief thoughts on my tenure as President from 2006 to 2008, in advance of the upcoming 75th anniversary of the CRA.

There is no question that the most significant event in my tenure began with a phone call from Murray Urowitz. After initial pleasantries, Murray got right to the point and asked if the CRA would be interested in purchasing the *Journal of Rheumatology*. The possible purchase of the *Journal of Rheumatology* would be the CRA's largest and most daring venture to date. Our discussion ended with my assurance that I would discuss this with the executive as soon as possible. One of the first people I called was Janet Pope to ask her what she thought of the idea. She replied that it was a "no-brainer" and that we



should definitely pursue the purchase. The CRA executive agreed and Arthur Bookman was asked to chair a committee, which worked very hard exploring the feasibility of the purchase and then negotiating financial terms and issues such as governance. This culminated in the signing of a letter of intent to take the next step of developing and agreeing to a purchase agreement. The Board of the CRA unanimously recommended that the CRA proceed with the purchase and the membership supported this recommendation with an almost unanimous vote. It

turns out that it was indeed a "no brainer".

I cannot talk about my presidency without mentioning Christine Charnock who was then the Executive Coordinator of the CRA. I cannot imagine how we could have survived without her dedication and plain hard work. As our organization evolved, we realized that we would need a full-time Executive Director with proper administrative support. We did not have to search far or long. We already had the perfect candidate. Christine assumed that role and the organization thrived.

The strength of the CRA since the very beginning has been the membership. I anticipated that working with colleagues would be exciting, productive and fun. I was not disappointed. The executive, board, committee chairs, committee members and the members at-large work very hard on behalf of us all. Also, Canada's pediatric rheumatologists officially joined the CRA with Bianca Lang as chair during my tenure.

It really was a fun two years.

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Christine Charnock, who was previously Executive Coordinator and later CEO of the CRA, and Dr. Gunnar Kraag.