



### Q & A WITH JOHN GANOE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE BOARD FOR REGISTERED POLYSOMNOGRAPHIC TECHNOLOGISTS

**Q. It's been more than 6 months since you took the reins as Executive Director of the Board of Registered Polysomnographic Technologists. What has impressed you the most?**

A. The commitment to the field of polysomnography demonstrated by the members of the BRPT Board is extraordinary. It's a relatively small board – 11 members – but every member is energetic, active, and committed. The Board members are all volunteers and each member devotes a great deal of time and expertise to BRPT. There is a strong sense of a shared agenda: to strengthen the RPSGT exam and the value of the credential and, by extension, to strengthen the profession.

**Q. What are your top three priorities for the BRPT?**

A. First, we need to assure that the exam itself is as strong as it can be. That means it needs to be reflective of the knowledge required of sleep technologists in the field if they are going to work efficiently and effectively with patients, performing and scoring studies and providing follow-up patient care. We perform a job analysis every few years to take a pulse of the profession as a way to be sure the exam reflects current practice. The last job analysis was conducted in 2004 and another is planned for early 2009.

A second priority is to make the application process as clear and painless as possible – for candidates and for our staff! The flood of applicants for the June testing window, the last window before eligibility requirements changed, was certainly challenging, but eye-opening as well. We are working very hard to make meaningful improvements in the application process.

Finally, it is important that we continue to communicate the value of the RPSGT credential to all our stakeholders. The RPSGT credential has been the "gold standard" in polysomnography for decades. That is an enviable position for an organization to be in, and we want to continue to build on that reputation.

**Q. What has been your greatest frustration?**

A. The greatest frustration for me is combating misperceptions about the exam and the application process. Taking a professional credentialing exam can be extremely stressful for our candidates. For many of our applicants, that stress may be increased because of pressure in their workplace to pass the RPSGT exam as a condition of promotion or, in some cases, continued employment. For those who don't pass, it can be very upsetting - and we're sensitive to that. Many people don't realize

that it is our mission to register more sleep technologists. We want applicants to pass the first time! BRPT was established as a way to assess and document competence and to meet the needs of sleep physicians and sleep facilities in need of competent staff. There is a significant shortage of registered technologists in the profession right now. While we want to see as many candidates pass the RPSGT exam as possible, we have a responsibility to maintain high standards and to ensure that those who pass the exam have met established criteria.

**Q. What are some of the changes you are making to streamline the application process?**

A. We're developing a webcast that applicants can view for free that helps explain the RPSGT exam application process. The webcast should be available the last week of October, in advance of the November 3rd deadline for the December 1-13 testing window. We have also prepared an "Insider's Guide to Applying for the RPSGT Exam," which outlines the most common mistakes that we see on applications and how to avoid them. Candidates can review the Guide on our web site, [www.brpt.org](http://www.brpt.org). And, we have established a task force to review the application itself and make it more applicant-friendly.

**Q. What advice would you offer an RPSGT candidate?**

A. That's easy. Download the free Candidate Handbook from the BRPT web site ([www.brpt.org](http://www.brpt.org)) and read every word of it. I would also recommend ordering the RPSGT Exam Study Guide. Statistics show that those who order the Study Guide – and, of course, make good use of it! -- are more likely to pass the exam. Taking the online practice exams is also very useful. And, it is important to send in your application as far in advance of the application deadline as possible. In the days just before an application deadline our three-person Executive Office staff, is swamped with paperwork, emails and phone calls. We can offer much more effective customer-service if you apply a few weeks in advance of the application deadline. In addition, if you apply early, you will have a much better chance of being able to get your choice of testing center, date and time.

**Q. What have you learned about RPSGTs in general?**

A. I've just returned from the Second Annual BRPT Symposium, held in San Diego September 4-6, and I came away very much impressed by how much RPSGTs love what

*Q and A...continued from previous page*

they do, and how fulfilling they find their jobs to be. Sleep problems are often treatable, and there is clearly a great deal of satisfaction in being part of successful treatment. RPSGTs are often in a position to see a patient experience immediate improvement, and that improvement in sleep can be life-changing. The BRPT did a survey of sleep technologists in 2007 that found more than 90 percent were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their credential and their profession.

**Q. Do you sleep better now that you work with the BRPT?**

A. (Laugh). You know, I've always been a pretty sound sleeper! I think I'm often a bit sleep deprived, like most of us. I do certainly have a much deeper understanding of sleep as a public health issue

**Q. When you're not focusing on BRPT, what do you like to do?**

I've always loved the outdoors, and outdoor adventure remains a real passion. And I'm a dog guy, through and through. I adopted a six-year old golden retriever, Henry, about a year ago. He is, without question, the best dog on the planet. And, he sleeps like a champ!

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*What Do Cows Dream About?...continued from page 36*

3. Sandyk,R., Anninos,P.A., Tsagas,N., Derpapas,K. [1992] *Magnetic fields in the treatment of Parkinson's disease : A case report* International Journal of Neuroscience vol.63, 141-150.

One of the tantalizing conclusions in this research was that some magnetic fields mimicked the behavioral effects of REM deprivation in two human subjects, one with MS and the other with Parkinson's Disease. An extensive bibliography including the above papers can be found at: <http://physlab.med.duth.gr/biocns.html>

Sandyk et al's research paper on the relationship of REM, and more specifically REM sleep deprivation and magnetic fields appeared in the Intl J Neuroscience 1992 65(1-4) pp 61-8. The abstract of this paper follows.

"The discovery of rapid eye movement (REM) sleep by Aserinsky and Kleitman in 1953 initiated the impetus for sleep research and specifically the investigations of the effects of REM sleep deprivation (RSD) on animal and human behavior. The behavioral effects of RSD include the enhancement of motivational and "drive"-related behaviors. In laboratory animals, RSD has been reported to increase appetite, sexual behavior, aggressiveness, and locomotor activity. Moreover, RSD reportedly improves mood in patients with endogenous depression and heightens appetite and sexual interest in normal subjects. Since "drive"-related behaviors are thought to involve activation of limbic dopaminergic reward sites, RSD may enhance motivational behaviors through an action on limbic dopaminergic functions. In the present communication, we present two patients (one with multiple sclerosis and the other with Parkinson's disease) in whom treatment with magnetic fields produced behavioral effects which paralleled those observed in REM-sleep-deprived animals and humans. We propose, therefore, that the behavioral and mental effects of treatment with magnetic fields may be mediated via RSD and, by inference, involve activation of limbic dopaminergic reward sites."

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