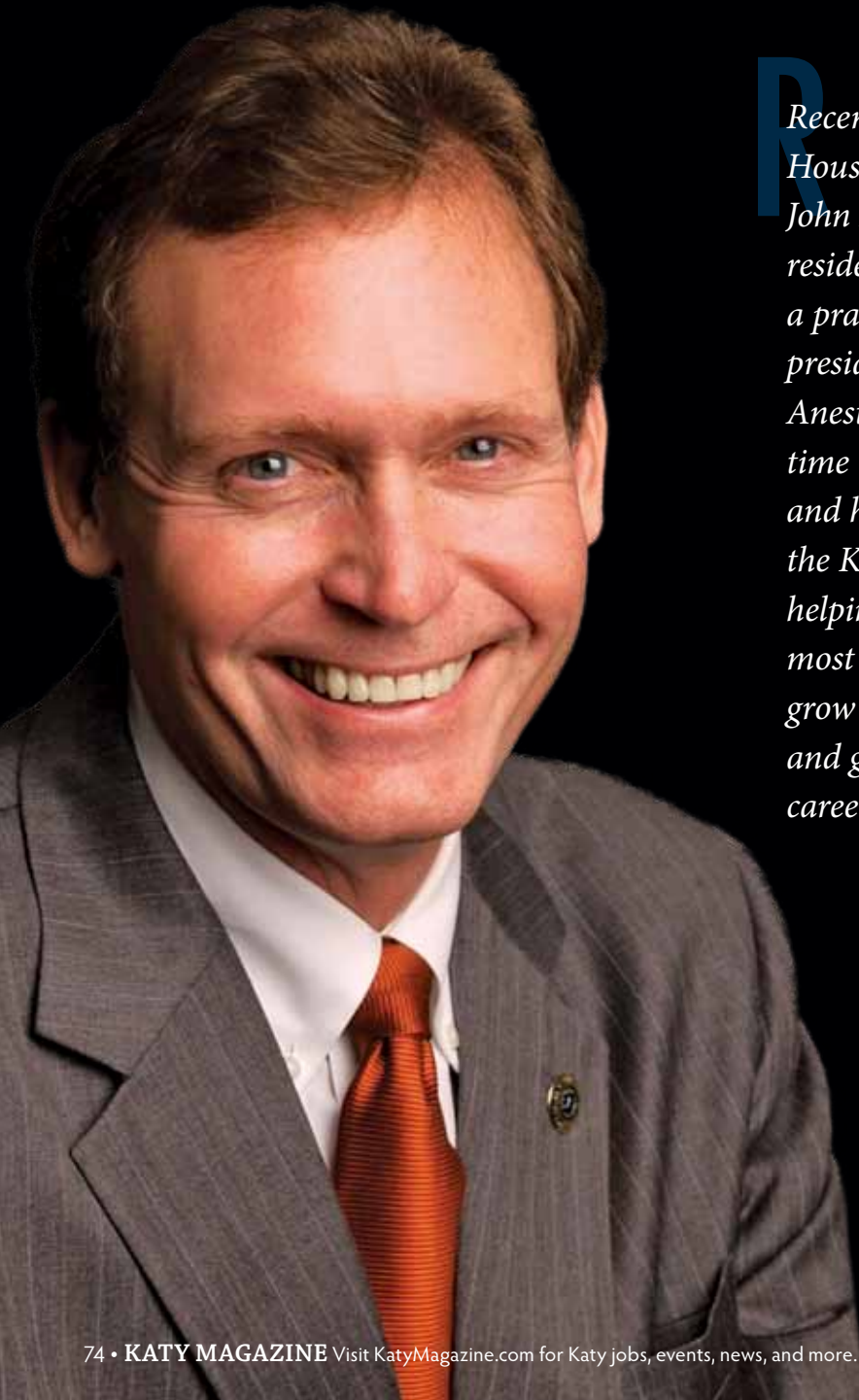


Katy Magazine talks to
State Representative
Dr. John Zerwas

Local legislator and physician enjoys serving others in the Katy-Fort Bend area

Written by Mary Hogan | Select Photography Courtesy of Dr. John Zerwas



R *Recently reelected to the Texas House of Representatives, Dr. John Zerwas balances serving the residents of District 28 with being a practicing anesthesiologist and president of the American Society of Anesthesiologists. He loves spending time with his wife, Cindy, and family and has set a strong example in the Katy-Fort Bend community for helping others. “My wife and I are most proud of seeing our children grow up in the Katy-Fort Bend area and go on to find their lives and career paths,” he shares.*

“I came to realize there was really a great deal of vigilance and work on the political front to protect patients and the practice of medicine.”

- Dr. John Zerwas

Finding His Path in Life

As one of five children, Dr. Zerwas was born in Tulsa, OK but moved across the country several times due to his father's work with Gulf Oil. During his high school years, his family finally settled in Houston. Dr. Zerwas graduated from Bellaire High School before earning degrees at the University of Houston and Baylor College of Medicine. "Probably the strongest connection I made to the area was meeting my wife, Cindy, as a junior in high school," Dr. Zerwas shares. The couple recently celebrated 34 years of marriage.

Growing up, Dr. Zerwas says his parents instilled solid morals and a strong work ethic, which he still values today. "My dad never said, 'You need to do this or go into this career or that,'" explains Dr. Zerwas, adding, "I grew up with a sense that hard work would always pay off and was also something that was extremely gratifying."

As he was finding his path in life, he also looked to his teachers for guidance and support. "There were a couple of teachers who really challenged me, took an interest in me, and gave me the sense of confidence that I needed in order to pursue pre-medicine," Dr. Zerwas says.

Putting Family First

As a father of four grown children – three sons and a daughter – and a grandfather of two, Dr. Zerwas makes family a priority in the midst of a busy schedule. "Being a dad is incredibly satisfying," he shares. "Through every phase, it was an adventure and the greatest of fun. It's really fun to see the kids grow up, find themselves, and still be there for them as a family. My wife has been extremely good about reminding us that even though the kids grow up and find their own way, we won't ever stop being a family."

Just like his father encouraged him growing up, Dr. Zerwas focused on instilling strong values in his children and letting them choose their own career paths. "I certainly hope I instilled having a good, strong work ethic and character, that the sky's the limit, and that when you choose to have a family, commit yourself wholly to that family – the return on that is enormous," he says.

He is grateful for Cindy's support throughout all of his endeavors. "My wife is the absolute foundation of anything I've done," Dr. Zerwas shares. "She's always been there for me 100 percent, even when we were raising the kids."

Pursuing a Career in Medicine

Dr. Zerwas describes himself as having a strong sense of service to others, a desire to be impactful in whatever situation he's currently facing, and possessing a healthy dose of humility. All three of these qualities led him down the path of becoming a physician. He started out pursuing a residency in surgery, before making the decision to become an anesthesiologist.

"I got partway down the road and realized the thing I enjoyed the most was being in the operating room," Dr. Zerwas explains, adding, "Anesthesiology plays a major role in medicine and is one of those practices that is somewhat esoteric," he adds.

A Place to Call Home

Having completed his medical school residency at the University of Texas at San Antonio, Dr. Zerwas and his family decided to move back home to the Houston area. He began practicing at Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital and found it very convenient to live in the Katy-Fort Bend area. "Living in this area allowed us to enjoy more of the small community atmosphere, but at the same time, we could tap into the vast resources Houston offered," he shares.

They enjoyed how friendly and inviting everyone was in the community. "We just found people were locating to this area for the same reasons we were: to raise a family and to enjoy the great schools and hometown environment," says Dr. Zerwas.

Joining the Political Front

After practicing medicine for many years, Dr. Zerwas began assuming an advocacy role with the Texas Society of Anesthesiologists and American Society of Anesthesiologists. At the same time, he also was medical partners with Dr. Kyle Janek, who served in the Texas Legislature. "I came to realize there was really a great deal of



Rep. John Zerwas and his wife Cindy at the Katy area Chamber of Commerce Gala

vigilance and work on the political front to protect patients and the practice of medicine,” recalls Dr. Zerwas, adding, “I had that awareness of the value there is by having somebody who understands your profession sit in the lawmaking body.”

In 2006, when the opportunity presented itself to run for the Texas House, Dr. Zerwas rose to the challenge. “Our children had grown up and moved out of the house, and I had some time to devote to it,” he shares. “Cindy and I found it was an honorable thing to do.” He is thankful for the support of both his family, and staff members with his anesthesiology practice and legislative office.

Serving District 28

Dr. Zerwas enjoys the friendships and relationships that come from serving the people of District 28. “I don’t know of any other opportunity that allows you to meet so many people and engage in conversations about so many different issues,” he says.

Some of the biggest concerns he has encountered among constituents center around providing foundational education and higher education programs, ensuring the economy is strong, and a focus on public safety. “As a representative, I have the opportunity to engage in

conversations to understand issues better and advocate for the residents of District 28,” says Dr. Zerwas.

He finds much motivation in the opportunity to be able to impact change in a positive way. “In the legislative world, I end up focusing a lot on healthcare issues and find it gratifying to participate on a large stage that can impact how healthcare is delivered,” he says.

Grateful to Be Able to Give Back

Over the years, Dr. Zerwas’ love of serving others has continually led toward new ways to give back. He encourages others to get involved any way they can. “Anybody who has opportunities to serve publicly, whether it’s on the city council or the school board, never discount your ability to do that,” he says. “At the end of the day, we need citizens to step up and do these kinds of things. It can have a tremendous impact if done with the right sort of goals and focus.” **KM**



MARY HOGAN enjoys sharing the stories of her Katy friends and neighbors, who inspire her to make a difference in the community.

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