

Blast from the Past

Andy Walker, MD FAAEM
Editor, *Common Sense*
AAEM Board Member



This edition of "Blast from the Past" includes the second issue of *Common Sense*, reprinted on the following pages. It reports two important milestones in the history of the Academy: AAEM's first annual meeting and its first mission statement. Compare that first mission statement with the current one, found on page two of this and every issue of *Common Sense*. It has expanded a bit but changed very little.

In reading the second issue of *Common Sense*, I was struck by the quality of the speakers at the very first annual meeting. This gathering was already on its way to being the best emergency medicine meeting in the world, AAEM's Annual Scientific Assembly. The other things that stand out are how active the Academy was, even then, meeting with the U.S. Surgeon General as well as ACEP and the AMA; how cheap the Academy's dues were, and still are; and the fact that Coastal sued Dr. George Schwartz, AAEM's secretary, for libel. We will watch that lawsuit play out as we continue to republish old issues of *Common Sense* in "Blast from the Past."

I would love to have been in that meeting between AAEM, ACEP, and the AMA. It was obviously another attempt to bring ACEP into the fight against the unfair treatment and exploitation of emergency physicians in the workplace. Read about it for yourself. It is the first story on the next page. ■

— The Editor

Celebrating 20 years as *the* specialty society of EM

20
YEARS

1993-2013

Visit www.aaem.org/about-aaem/celebrating-20-years.



when minutes count

The Voice of the Specialist in Emergency Medicine

September, 1994

Volume 1, Number 2

COMMON SENSE

AAEM PRESENTS CRITICAL ISSUES AT THE AMA

by George Schwartz, M.D., F.A.A.E.M., Secretary, American Academy of Emergency Medicine



In June 2, 1994 a historic meeting was held at the AMA headquarters in Chicago. Representatives of AAEM met with those of the AMA and of

ACEP and key issues were laid on the table and discussed. Participants included AAEM President Dr. James Keaney, Vice President Dr. Scott Plantz, Dr. Robert McNamara, and Dr. Marcus Pittman, as well as AAEM Secretary Dr. George Schwartz who attended by speakerphone after an early morning flight was cancelled. The AMA was represented by Nancy Dickey, M.D., Kirk Johnson, Counsel, and Irv Bomberger. ACEP was represented by President John McCabe, M.D., Executive Director Colin Rorrie, Ph.d., and Micheal Gallery, Ph.d.

Key issues discussed included the growth of large multi-hospital groups and the unethical conditions which often are related to these groups including lack of due process in physician termination, non-compete clauses, and the subsequent effect on the quality of care to the public. Dr. McNamara raised concerns about cuts in residency training positions which are being proposed in the face of a shortage of specialists in our field. The apparent role of ACEP in fostering the large exploitative groups was discussed which is illustrated by the deep involvement of many of ACEP's previous presidents and board members in many of these groups. Also aired was the concern that many of the critical issues facing Emergency Medicine could not be discussed at appropriate forums, e.g. the ACEP Scientific Assembly, due to pressure from attorneys who delivered opinions which were not only unwritten, but also unsubstantiated in case law. In fact these opinions concerning restraint of trade touted by ACEP are contrary to the opinions of other experts in the field of associations, leading one to the conclusion that they may be self-serving.

The issue of representation of Emergency Medicine at the AMA was raised, but not resolved. AAEM's position that it speaks for the specialist was countered by ACEP's argument that its numbers are greater, and will

remain so as its criterion for membership is "significant interest" in Emergency Medicine, not board certification.

In summary, I was pleased that such a high level meeting occurred in which the critical issues of the Mission Statement of AAEM were brought to the table. The AMA seemed to be seriously concerned with the

issues, however was reluctant to intervene.

They perceived the issues as more of an internal debate within the specialty. This beginning of serious dialogue is vastly important in that it represents the perceived importance of the issues raised by AAEM as well as the key role that AAEM will play in the future as the specialty society of Emergency Medicine.

AAEM Holds First Annual Meeting in Las Vegas



From left, Drs. Bob McNamara, George Schwartz, Chris Minas, Phyllis Troia, Drew Fenton, Howard Freed (representing the White House), Rick Key, and Jim Keaney

The First Annual Meeting of AAEM got *The Renaissance in Emergency Medicine* off to a good start with a stimulating agenda and a line-up of diverse speakers who deliberated topics heretofore not discussed in an Emergency Medicine meeting, such as wellness, universal health care, the impact of certain multihospital groups on the specialty, and how to protect one's rights through legal remedies when all others have been

exhausted. The *Excalibur Hotel* set the mood for this most unconventional of conventions which was highlighted by the Saturday evening banquet entitled *The Whiskey Rebellion Hootenanny*, with active spousal attendance. **First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton** sent Dr. Howard Freed to represent the **White House**. The 700 Club was on hand to film the event.

And to think that the United States also had such a brash and humble beginning!



AAEM DELEGATION MEETS SURGEON GENERAL DURING SAEM MEETING IN WASHINGTON

by James K. Keane, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.A.E.M., President, A.A.E.M.

WHY WE WILL PREVAIL

Ralph Nader gave a keynote address at the recent **Society for Academic Emergency Medicine** meeting. He spoke of how one goes from the research lab to a true movement. First the "*citizen jolt*" has to occur. The second event in any viable movement is the *formation of a critical mass of members*. He suggested 500 as the number needed to organize a national movement. AAEM on the strength of a single nationwide mailing got 600 members. Nader then spoke of *passion*. The 500 had to be passionate about their effort. *Passion was the key, and passion, Nader says, will topple any amount of money and power.*

I know Nader is right about the passion. At the SAEM meeting AAEM took advantage of Washington's locale and met with several people. I, Lewis Goldfrank, Bob McNamara, and Phyllis Troia first had a private meeting with **Surgeon General Jocelyn Elders, MD,**

Undersecretary of Health and Human Services Phil Lee, MD, and the chief administrative aide to Representative Pete Stark, Doneg McDounagh. We divided our time equally among the Anti-profiteering Act and the COGME issue of residency positions in Emergency Medicine.

When I came back to our AAEM booth at the SAEM conference, we were asked by many of the participants, "*How did you get in to see these people privately?*" The answer is simple: **the passion of our members.** All these meetings were set up by our membership, right down to the times for us simply to show up. Good thing we had enough passionate members who offered to staff our booth while we were off to Capitol Hill. By the way, potential members were three deep at our booth during break times.

No one should mistake AAEM as an organization of disgruntled, whiny victims. Goodness no! AAEM is a collection of

frontiersmen with the vision and courage to give this nation the finest Emergency Medical care system in the world. And to accomplish that goal, we have many members working at local and national levels, all passionate, and this is

WHY WE WILL PREVAIL!

QUALITY THROUGH JUSTICE!

AAEM Vice President Scott Plantz, already the author of several Emergency Medicine books, plans to write a manual on how to acquire and set up your own ED practice. He seeks contributing authors, and can be reached at 800 S. Wells, Suite 746, Chicago, IL 60607. Telephone: (312) 341-1176

AN ATTACK AT THE HEART OF AAEM?

A libel suit filed by Coastal this spring against AAEM's secretary and guiding force Dr. George Schwartz alleges that the well-known professor of Emergency Medicine "**maliciously intended to subject Coastal to ridicule, contempt, and disgrace...**" with an article entitled "*SOUNDING AN ALARM AGAINST UNSCRUPULOUS CONTRACT MANAGEMENT*" published in EMERGENCY MEDICINE NEWS, February 1994. Although conceding Coastal was not mentioned by name, the action seeks compensatory and punitive damages, and furthermore demands a trial by jury. Dr. Schwartz in a counterclaim argues that Coastal engages in "**exploitation of Emergency Physicians**" and "**unfair and deceptive practices**" and that the suit seeks only to use its "**raw economic power and the unjustified threat of expensive litigation to muzzle Dr. Schwartz**" and thereby to destroy AAEM.

AAEM SECRETARY DR. GEORGE SCHWARTZ SUED FOR LIBEL BY COASTAL

When initially asked to comment in early July, Coastal spokesperson David Singley stated he had not seen the complaint or countercomplaint and therefore had no comment on the actions. Dr. Schwartz who was reached in Florida where he was visiting his mother stated that he had "**spoken the truth. Let the chips fall where they may, and I'm perfectly prepared to prove the truth in any forum whatsoever.**"

At the first Board of Directors meeting in Las Vegas the leadership of AAEM agreed to wholeheartedly support Dr. Schwartz, agreeing that the suit was an attack at the heart of AAEM.



WELLNESS

BY JOHN KEALY, M.D.
CHAIRPERSON, AAEM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wellness! The word is starting to come up in the most unlikely places from the most unlikely sources. It is now an "in" word, prompting articles, books, seminars, and workshops—the focus of the nineties and hopefully beyond. The search for wellness is as old as the human species. We instinctively know what it is *not*. We know it is *not* about staying healthy and living to be as old as Methuselah. It is *not* about making a lot of money and having the "good life." These things certainly make life palatable and may be consequences of wellness but they don't constitute it. Wellness exists within the framework of birth, life, living, dying, and death. Somehow, somewhere there exists a way of being in relationship to this paradigm that produces wellness.

The science of medicine, as distinct from its art, has traditionally been focused on body health, with the spiritual and mental dimensions addressed in other disciplines and institutions, e.g. psychiatry, religions, and spiritual practices. Everything has been neatly separated to the point that even patients are referred to as "the tibia in room 4." When presented with this evidence we smile and say that we don't really mean *that!* The reality is, consciously or not,

this separation of mind and body has fragmented our lives to the point that we may live with relationships that lack integration and inspiration. That integrating and inspiring essence is the Holy Grail of Wellness. What it is for each person is a unique lifelong discovery process. Some never start, others are awakened to its presence by the pain of unexpected change while others take on the challenge with passion and excitement.

"People don't grow old. When they stop growing they age."

Chopra's quote captures the essence of the odyssey to wellness. Growth is usually seeded in the challenging and sometimes painful experience of change. The change could be the personal loss of job, family, security, or a loved one. It can be the challenge of taking on something new, doing things in a different way, or going the extra mile. In all cases there is a change in the status of an existing relationship or set of relationships. One thing becomes obvious to anyone involved in change: when one relationship changes, everything changes. You cannot break the pretzel in one spot! One aspect of wellness is the relationship we have to ourselves. This relationship is the cornerstone of

any work in the arena of wellness. This personal growth and development is the most important of all relationships and the one that may be the least nourished. It requires great honesty, and many times can be most difficult. *The AAEM meeting in Las Vegas was a moving experience. It was an expression of wellness at an individual and group level.* There was the necessary "kvetching", the commonality of shared experiences, the intimacy of shared pain, the excitement of shared vision, and the identification of a mission that would reflect the values of our lives as committed human beings and physicians. It was a great start for wellness at a group and institutional level. The building blocks for this success is the individual commitment we make to our personal health and well-being. *"Physician, heal thyself."*

Be well!

WANTED: ALIVE & WELL
Volunteers to serve on AAEM Committees. For the Education Committee contact John Kealy, MD at (201) 971-5044 or (914) 423-7890. Other committee assignments are currently being worked out and will soon be publicized.

An Invitation to Participate in the American Academy of Emergency Medicine

Full Voting Member:	\$195
(Board-certified in Emergency Medicine or Pediatric Emergency Medicine)	
Resident or Fellow:	\$50
Associate Member:	\$100
(Nonvoting status)	
Lifetime Member:	\$2,500

Send check to:

American Academy of Emergency Medicine
P.O. Box 1968
Santa Fe, NM 87504
1-800-884-AAEM (2236)

The American Academy of Emergency Medicine is a non-profit professional organization

Our Mailing List is Private

AAEM MISSION STATEMENT

The American Academy of Emergency Medicine is the specialty society of Emergency Medicine. AAEM is a democratic organization committed to the following principles:

1. Every individual should have unencumbered access to quality emergency care provided by a specialist in Emergency Medicine.
2. A specialist in Emergency Medicine is a physician who has achieved, through personal dedication and sacrifice, certification by the American Board of Emergency Medicine.
3. The practice of Emergency Medicine is best conducted by a specialist in Emergency Medicine.
4. The Academy supports the growth of residency programs and graduate medical education, which are essential to the continued enrichment of Emergency Medicine, and to ensure a high quality of care for the patient.
5. The personal and professional welfare of the individual specialist of Emergency Medicine is a primary concern to the AAEM.
6. The Academy supports fair and equitable practice environments necessary to allow the specialist in Emergency Medicine to deliver the highest quality of patient care. Such an environment includes provisions for due process and the absence of restrictive covenants.

Adopted April 30, 1994 by the Board of Directors in Las Vegas, Nevada



ANNOUNCING THE FIRST ANNUAL AAEM SCIENTIFIC ASSEMBLY!

This conference, co-sponsored by the *Medical College of Pennsylvania*, is directed at the board-certified specialist in Emergency Medicine. It will provide an advanced-level overview of new developments and the latest recommendations regarding major clinical topics in Emergency Medicine. Basic reviews will *not* be presented. It will be held in historic Philadelphia at the Society Hill Sheraton from Friday, October 14th through Sunday, October 16, 1994. Fifteen Category I AMA credits will be provided. The cost is \$300 (\$275 Early Bird), \$150 for residents (\$125 Early Bird).

The panel of prominent Emergency Physicians presenting advanced level talks in adult and pediatric care will include:

- Adrienne Buffaloe, M.D.
- Daniel F. Danzl, M.D.
- Daniel Dire, M.D.
- Glen Freas, M.D.
- Lewis Goldfrank, M.D.
- Micheal B. Heller, M.D.
- Robert Hoffman, M.D.
- David Jaffe, M.D.
- John Kealy, M.D.
- Brent King, M.D.
- John Loiselle, M.D.
- Robert M. McNamara, M.D.
- Edward A. Panacek, M.D.
- James Roberts, M.D.
- David K. Wagner, M.D.
- Donald M. Yealy, M.D.

For brochure and registration contact the CME office at (215) 762-8263 or AAEM (800) 884-2236.

Don't miss the most advanced Emergency Medicine meeting of the year!

EMBBS

A computer bulletin board system dedicated to Emergency Physicians, **EMBBS**, is coming on line in September. Physicians can dial in with any basic computer and modem to communicate with hundreds of peers with electronic mail, special topic messages, and computer conferencing! The goal of this free service is to make computerized communication easy enough for even the novice to enjoy. Share *your* ideas and opinions! For more information phone Ash Nashed, M.D. at (908) 469-7129.

COMMON SENSE
 is the official newsletter of
 the American Academy of
 Emergency Medicine.
 Send correspondence to:
AAEM-Common Sense
 Attn: Drew Fenton, M.D., Editor
 P. O. Box 1968
 Santa Fe, NM 87504
 Tel: (800) 884-2236
 Fax: (505) 983-1383



American Academy of Emergency Medicine
 P.O. Box 1968
 Santa Fe, NM 87504
 1-800-884-AAEM Fax: 505-983-1383

when minutes count



THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN
 THIS NEWSLETTER ARE THOSE
 OF THE AUTHORS AND
 DO NOT REPRESENT
 AAEM POLICY UNLESS STATED.

AAEM thanks Robert McNamara, MD FAAEM, for sharing his archives to reprint in *Common Sense*.

19444-2233 04

