



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by A. Antoine Kazzi, MD FAAEM

Why I Joined AAEM

Martin Luther King, Jr. said once that, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

Nearly midnight Friday in Beirut, I find myself in a coffeehouse down the street from my new apartment, writing to you – our members and friends, my last President's Message, wondering how to relay to you the strong feelings I have about my last 21 years in the USA, working side-by-side with so many wonderful leaders and emergency physicians to serve our patients and communities the best we can.

Most of you do not know it yet; however, it was only four weeks ago that I chose to move back to Beirut to establish the first academic department of emergency medicine at the American University of Beirut, with a residency program that will meet all the ACGME requirements that we have defined for proper training in the specialty we cherish. This was not an easy decision; and I am confident that most of you have experienced that bittersweet paradoxical feeling which prevails when we say goodbye to what we love: we grow a little and die a little...

Tonight, I could speak to you about the AAEM activities or discuss its educational, political and practice-related achievements. I was also tempted to speak in-depth about the wonderful gathering of 1,400 emergency physicians from 67 nations and the 50 societies that were working together during the Third Mediterranean Emergency Medicine Congress to produce the largest and best international scientific conference that our specialty has produced.

However, deep in my heart, I hear a voice telling me instead to tell you a personal story, and to have the story relayed to you so you know how I really feel about the Academy and my last 21 years living as a citizen and free man in the USA.

My friends and colleagues in the AAEM Board of Directors know some of this. It was in 1984 that I immigrated to the USA to study medicine, after I was forced to interrupt my studies at the American University of Beirut. The campus had fallen in the hands of forces that were hostile to my sect and upset at my years of service fighting against a foreign occupation army. That was a time when the forces

of sectarian evil were reigning over the whole country. There was too much religion and too little faith. Sadly, the black shadow of those forces remains at large... At the age of 12, I experienced my hometown under siege and bombarded for a full year, and the absurdity of inter-sectarian strife. I then witnessed 5,000 soldiers of that occupation army invade the town and slaughter 1,000 civilians over 72 hours. In one of the neighborhoods that were first overrun, my family and I were the only ones to survive those 3 nights of horror.

The rest of my years in Lebanon were colored by those events. We went to school during the day and manned the barricades and trenches at night. Some days, nights or weeks were worse than others. It was a time when so many spoke of God and justice; yet only a few knew the value of law, the respect of the life and freedom of others. Forgotten was the value of equality, civil rights, integrity and tolerance.

Forced to interrupt my medical studies, I found myself again pressured to return to the trenches. However, my three years at the American University of Beirut had certainly convinced me more than ever that sectarianism was absurd and atrocious. I was no longer 13. I was 20 and had learned my lesson. I took advantage of the first opportunity I had to board a plane and landed in Logan Airport in Boston. Two days later a wonderful Dean, Dr. William Mac'Nary, gave me a probationary status in his medical school, and gave me the chance to have what turned out to be a new life and a wonderfully blessed career in the USA.

Yet, deep in my heart, I found myself alone and away from my family and community. I was yearning for that feeling of belonging, of an extended family and searching for a struggle where I would again feel the same passion and integrity I had felt for a cause at one point in my teenage life.

This search did not take too long. I soon found emergency medicine was my community and felt deep in my heart that the American Academy of Emergency Medicine had become my family. I found purity in its mission and vision statements. Yes, I certainly saw that it had idealism, and that many criticized it as utopian. However, I also experienced firsthand the integrity of its leaders. I felt passion for its objectives and aspirations and saw true value in its activities and engagements.

I always will.

So, to answer my own question, why did I join the American Academy of Emergency Medicine?

continued on pg 12



when minutes count

Officers

- A. Antoine Kazzi, MD, *President*
- Tom Scaletta, MD, *Vice-President*
- William Durkin, Jr. MD, *Secretary-Treasurer*
- Joseph Wood, MD JD, *Immediate Past President*
- Robert McNamara, MD, *Past Presidents Council Representative*

Board Members

- Howard Blumstein, MD
- Tracy Boykin, MD
- Anthony DeMond, MD
- Stephen R. Hayden, MD
- James Li, MD
- Kevin Rodgers, MD
- Ghazala Sharieff, MD
- Richard Shih, MD
- Larry Weiss, MD JD

President, AAEM

Mark Reiter, MD MBA

Common Sense Staff

- Howard Blumstein, MD Editor
- Helen Kopec, Managing Editor
- Miko Walker, Job Bank Coordinator
- Kat Peterson, Art Director

Articles appearing in Common Sense are intended for the individual use of AAEM members. They may not be duplicated or distributed without the explicit permission of AAEM. Permission is granted in some instances in the interest of public education. Requests for reprints should be directed to Helen Kopec, Managing Editor, at: AAEM, 555 East Wells Street, Suite 1100, Milwaukee, WI 53202, Tel: (800) 884-2236, Fax: (414) 276-3349, Email: hkopec@aaem.org.

AAEM Mission Statement

The American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM) 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. The practice of emergency medicine is best conducted by a specialist in emergency medicine.
3. A specialist in emergency medicine is a physician who has achieved, through personal dedication and sacrifice, certification by either the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) or the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine (AOBEM).
4. The personal and professional welfare of the individual specialist in emergency medicine is a primary concern to the AAEM.
5. 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.
6. The Academy supports 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.
7. The Academy is committed to providing affordable high quality continuing medical education in emergency medicine for its members.

Membership Information

Fellow and Full Voting Member: \$345 (Must be ABEM or AOBEM certified in EM or Pediatric EM)  
 Emeritus Member: \$250 (Must be 65 years old and a full voting member in good standing for 3 years)

\* Associate membership is limited to graduates of an ACGME or AOA approved Emergency Medicine program.

\* Associate Member: \$250 (Non-voting status)  
 AAEM/RSA Member: \$50 (Non-voting status)  
 Student Member: \$50 (Non-voting status)

Send check or money order to: AAEM, 555 East Wells Street, Suite 1100, Milwaukee, WI 53202, Tel: (800) 884-2236, Fax: (414) 276-3349, Email: info@aaem.org  
 AAEM is a non-profit, professional organization. Our mailing list is private.

## Upcoming AAEM-Endorsed or AAEM Sponsored Conferences for 2006

### January 22-26, 2006

- Fourth Annual Western States Winter Conference on Emergency Medicine  
During the Sundance Film Festival  
The Canyons, Park City, UT

Sponsored the Emergency Medicine Departments of:  
Oregon Health and Science  
University, University of Utah Health Sciences Center,  
University of California,  
San Diego Medical Center, University of California, Irvine  
<http://www.wswcem.com>

### February 16-18, 2006

- 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Assembly  
Marriott Rivercenter, San Antonio, Texas  
Sponsored and organized by the American Academy of  
Emergency Medicine  
[www.aaem.org](http://www.aaem.org)

### March 5-10, 2006

- 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Mammoth Mountain Emergency Medicine  
Conference  
Mammoth Lakes, CA  
<http://www.mammothmountainemconf.com/>  
(2006 website coming soon)

### March 6-7, 2006

- 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Assembly of the Israeli Association for  
Emergency Medicine  
Hilton Tel Aviv Hotel, Israel

Sponsored by the Israeli Association for Emergency  
Medicine (IAEM)  
[http://www.congress.co.il/emergency2006/  
index.asp?page](http://www.congress.co.il/emergency2006/index.asp?page)

### March 30-April 1, 2006

- Emergency Medicine – Moving Forward 2006  
Scottsdale Marriott at McDowell Mountains, Scottsdale, AZ

Sponsored by Mayo School of Continuing Medical Education  
at the Mayo Clinic School of Medicine, Scottsdale, AZ  
[http://www.mayo.edu/cme/emergency-  
medicine.html](http://www.mayo.edu/cme/emergency-medicine.html)

### April 7, 2006

- Clinical Management of Orthopedic Injuries Presenting to the  
Emergency Department  
Post-Graduate Medical School of the New York University  
School of Medicine, New York, NY

Sponsored by the NYU Post-Graduate Medical School  
<https://tools.med.nyu.edu/Cmecourses>

### April 18-21, 2006

- First Inter-American Conference on Emergency Medicine  
*Controversies and Consensus in Emergency Medicine: A Bi-Lingual  
Conference with Simultaneous Translation*  
(Preconference workshops April 18, 2006)  
Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Convention Center  
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Co-sponsored by the American Academy of Emergency  
Medicine, the Sociedad Argentina de Emergencias (SAE) and  
the American College of Emergency Physicians.  
[www.emcongress.org](http://www.emcongress.org)

### April 22-23, 2006

- AAEM Pearls of Wisdom Oral Board Review Course  
Embassy Suites Airport in Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles,  
Orlando, Philadelphia  
Course sponsored and organized by the American Academy  
of Emergency Medicine  
<http://www.aaem.org>

### May 24-26, 2006

- High Risk Emergency Medicine  
Hotel Nikko, San Francisco, CA  
Conference sponsored by San Francisco General Hospital and  
the Department of Emergency Medicine at the University of  
California, San Francisco  
[https://www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/  
CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MDM06Q23](https://www.cme.ucsf.edu/cme/CourseDetail.aspx?coursenumber=MDM06Q23)

Do you have an upcoming educational conference or activity you would like listed in Common Sense and on the AAEM website? Please contact Tom Derenne to learn more about the AAEM endorsement approval process: [tderenne@aaem.org](mailto:tderenne@aaem.org).

All endorsed, supported and sponsored conferences and activities must be approved by AAEM's ACCME Subcommittee.

### President's Message- continued from pg 2

Because emergency medicine is not only just a job! It is a vocation! A struggle to do what is best and what is right and ethical for our patients and colleagues. And because the AAEM stands for integrity and transparency in the way we practice and serve patients, the specialty and the individual specialist!

Another quote by Martin Luther King, Jr. best mirrors the essence of AAEM: "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

AAEM will never be silent about the issues that matter! Looking at the slate of candidates, I am very confident stating loud and clear that AAEM is in good hands and will sooner or later succeed in turning the specialty back to where it needs to be!

Yes, as I write these farewell words as your president, I renew my commitment to serve the specialty we cherish, the specialist and most of all the patients we care for – anywhere I go.

I am not saying goodbye to AAEM. I have been a member for 12 years, since the AAEM was founded by those who took the first stand against the forces of greed! I will continue to serve the American Academy on select international and US national matters the best I can.

"I have been so fortunate for the privilege you gave to me - to serve as an AAEM President, Vice President and Board member over the last 7 years." I will, therefore, always be most indebted to you for your confidence and support, grateful for the privilege of serving our nation and specialty and certainly very proud to be a citizen of our great nation, the United States of America.

As I conclude my statement, I wish to take a moment to thank my closest mentors and friends in AAEM: Dr. Robert McNamara, Dr. Tom Scaletta, Dr. Joe Wood, Dr. Peter Rosen, Dr. Lewis Goldfrank, Dr. Mark Langdorf, Dr. Steve Hayden, Dr. Bill Durkin, Dr. Larry Weiss, Dr. Ramon Johnson and Dr. Jerris Hedges, the AAEM Executive Director, Ms. Kay Whalen and her outstanding team, the remaining current and past directors and officers of the Board of Directors, the very inspiring Dr. Joe Lex, Dr. Ghazala Sharieff, Dr. Amal Mattu and Dr. Bob Simon, and most of all, the members of AAEM for their confidence and guidance.

I will conclude with one last statement by Dr. Martin Luther King... that has particular meaning that mirrors the spirit of this moment... "If life is to be complete it must include not only the dimension of length but also of breadth, by which the individual concerns himself in the welfare of others. No man has learned to live until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity." 