The “World Cup” of Emergency Medicine Conferences

by Joe Lex, MD FAAEM

Superlatives almost cannot do justice to what we are planning in Nice, France, over the Labor Day weekend this year. The European Society for Emergency Medicine (EuSEM) and the American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM) are putting together a top-notch lineup of outstanding speakers and educators from around the world for the 3rd Mediterranean Emergency Medicine Conference (MEMC3).

This international gathering begins with Preconference Courses and an Opening Ceremony on Friday, September 2, 2005, and continues for three solid days of incredible educational experiences in a resort-like setting on the French Riviera. We have firm commitments to attend and speak from the biggest names in American emergency medicine, including Jerome Hoffman, Richard Bukata, Peter Rosen, Judith Tintinalli, Diane Birnbaum, Billy Mallon, Lewis Goldfrank, and Ron Walls. Other AAEM favorites will also attend and speak, including Ghazala Sharieff, Amal Mattu, Larry Raney, Bob McNamara, and Nate Shapiro. I challenge you to find a more exciting emergency medicine conference anywhere in the world. And we’ll even give you at least 19 hours of AMA-PRA Category 1 CME for attending.

There will be half-day or full-day educational tracks on Cardiovascular and Resuscitation Emergencies, Traumatic Emergencies, Infectious Disease, Neurologic Emergencies, Shock, Pharmacology, Toxicologic Emergencies, Pediatric Emergencies, Prehospital Medicine, Disaster Medicine, and a three-day track of “Core Content” updates.

Preconference sessions will be offered on Noninvasive Airway Management, Hospital Disaster Planning, Pediatric Procedures, Wound Management, Airway Updates, and Procedural Ultrasound.

MEMC2 was in Sitges, Spain, in September 2003. It was an unforgettable experience for anyone who attended. More than 1300 emergency practitioners from more than 60 countries around the world gathered for three days in a beach town near Barcelona. The conference’s reputation now has attracted even more interest and we expect a much higher attendance in France.

In addition to several simultaneous academic tracks, more than 600 original papers will be presented in both English and French, and more than 500 posters will be displayed. If you want to brush up on your French, one complete clinical track will be conducted in that language.

We have set aside a 300-seat auditorium solely for speakers to give an update on Emergency Medicine in My Country, which was one of the most popular features at prior conferences.

The Nice Acropolis (www.nice-acropolis.com) is a superlative conference center, the biggest on the French Riviera, and we’re anxious to take advantage of their facilities. Many nearby hotels are ranked three- and four-star.

And do I need to convince you about the city of Nice? It has a subtropical climate on the Mediterranean with incredible views, amazing restaurants, and outstanding museums including the Musee de Matisse (Henri Matisse lived in Nice for 40 years) and Musee National Message Biblique Marc-Chagall. Less than an hour away are the principality of Monaco (and the casinos of Monte Carlo), the Rothschild Estate, the spectacular ancient hill villages of Eze, Peillon and Peille, the Old Town of St-Paul-de-Vence, Antibes, the Picasso Museum in the Grimaldi Castle… Let’s face it, if you don’t go you’ll kick yourself forever, so just start planning now.

Read the details of the conference as they unfold at the website — www.emcongress.org.

Somewhat Closer to Home

Although not quite as exotic or distant as France, AAEM is deeply involved in the planning of an International Interdisciplinary Conference on Emergencies in Montréal, Quebec, during the last week of June. AAEM members Jerome Hoffman, Antoine Kazzi, Marvin Wayne, Robert McNamara, Amal Mattu, Ghazala Sharieff, and myself are all invited to give two or more talks at this 5-day global gathering of intensivists of every stripe. Check www.iice2005montreal.com/home.html for details and updates. Between 2000 and 3000 participants are expected at this bilingual gathering.

Montréal is another multicultural city with amazing museums, restaurants, and gardens, along with a world-class zoo. If you can’t make it to Monaco, try the Casino de Montréal. Another must-see is the Montréal Biodôme.

After the Conference, stick around for the 26th Montréal Jazz Festival to hear such legends as Roberta Flack, Al Jarreau, Dave Holland, Bobby McFerrin, Madeline Peyroux, and The Five Blind Boys of Alabama with special guest Mavis Staples.

We were asked to participate in this venue because of our excellent reputation in supplying high-quality education. AAEM will offer at least ten hours of AMA-PRA Category 1 CME credit for American attendees.

Time for a Change

After you’ve done a thing the same way for two years, look it over carefully. After five years, look at it with suspicion. And after ten years, throw it away and start all over.

-Alfred E. Perelman, New York Times, 3 July 1958

I used the quote above in my prior column for a reason. I’m entering my fifth and final year as Chair of Education for AAEM,
View from the Podium - continued from pg 7

and it’s time to “look at it with suspicion.” This organization took a chance on me when I was an unknown quantity and gave me an incredible opportunity to develop some educational programs in a new and exciting way. I’m proud of our accomplishments over the last several years – the Oral Board Review Course (which prepares 200 people annually – almost 20% of those taking the boards), the Written Board Review Course, the Board Review Question Book (co-produced with Pennsylvania ACEP), the Jam Session, the Annual Scientific Assembly with its unique Open Microphone session, the Speakers’ Bureau, and the chance to work with others passionate about education, such as Scott Plantz of EMedicine, Rick Nunez of EMedHome, Mel Herbert of EMRAP, and many others.

As I explained to the Executive Committee in my letter of imminent resignation, I’m not burned out. Far from it! Rather, I think I’ve “run the string” on things new and original. It’s time to give a new voice and new face to the organization before projects start to get hidebound and stale. AAEM is perceived as a brash young organization and deserves to have brash young ideas about education. I will oversee the Education Committee for a fifth year. When the Executive Committee chooses my replacement, I will mentor him or her until our San Antonio Scientific Assembly in 2006. At that time I will step down.

Five years is enough; I have many other projects that challenge me at both the local and international level. I will continue to serve as a member of the Education Committee, and offer my thoughts when solicited to do so. AAEM has allowed me to succeed in ways I never believed possible; I am forever grateful for the opportunity you gave me.