

ASAMS

**AMERICAN
SOCIETY OF
AEROSPACE
MEDICINE
SPECIALISTS**
1999/2000 NEWSLETTER

Yes! Your specialty society is still alive and kicking. It's just been a little slow getting the word out to the membership, but that hasn't stopped your organization from making some significant strides forwards for the specialty of aerospace medicine.

RIGHT NOW! Before doing anything else. Please turn to the renewal application included with this Newsletter and fill it out. Write out your check for this year's ASAMS dues. You'll know if your delinquent if you check the mailing label on the Newsletter. If it doesn't indicate the year 2000 or beyond your behind! While you're at it why not go ahead and pay through 2001. Come on! It's only another 10 bucks at most and you'll avoid any future dues increases for at least another year. Thank you.

In this issue you'll read about the annual membership meeting held this last May in Detroit, the results of some early ASAMS initiatives, news of interest to aerospace medicine specialists from the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM), and results of a National Aerospace Medicine Curriculum Meeting.

ASAMS MEMBERSHIP RATIFIES THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

The membership voted overwhelming last April to ratify ASAMS Constitution and ByLaws. ASAMS required a three quarter's majority to ratify and it received an almost unanimous vote. Each member should take pride in the very high return rate for the C and BL ballots. Thanks to everyone for actively participating in the process.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

ASAMS' annual membership meeting was held on Thursday, 20 May 1999, in Detroit at the much-too-early hour of 7:30 am. Despite the lousy time 69 members signed in and a few more attended but missed the sign in sheet.

Annual Meeting Committee Reports

Society Newsletter Committee: The chairman of the Society Newsletter committee, Dr. Lloyd Dodd, Jr., reported at the meeting on several new initiatives for the newsletter. He planned to establish several dedicated columns within the newsletter and a new more interesting format. Dr. Dodd requested anyone with input for the newsletter to send that information directly to him.

[Editor's Comment] Good and bad news following the Society Newsletter Committee's report in May. The good news is that Dr. Dodd was subsequently promoted to Brigadier General in the USAF. The bad news is that his new position has left him with no time for the newsletter. If anyone has an interest in serving as the society's newsletter committee chair please let Dr. Al Parmet know ASAP. Until a new Chair is selected you may send your recommendations for the Newsletter directly to Dr. Mike Mork. Dr. Mork may be reached at his e-mail address: samram@concentric.net

Nominating Committee: Dr. Richard Jennings chairs the nominating committee and he and his committee members placed before the membership a stellar roster of nominees for officer positions within ASAMS.

For Vice President/President Elect:

Dr. Chris Heinrichs
Dr. Stan Mohler

For Secretary:

Dr. P. Glenn Merchant
Dr. Vincent Michaud

For Board of Governors (electing 3):

Dr. James Laub
Dr. Mike Mork
Dr. James Roudebush
Dr. Arleen Saenger
Dr. George (Peach) Taylor
Dr. Steve Veronneau

Nominations were also solicited from the floor, but none were offered.

The membership then held a secret ballot and elected Dr. Chris Heinrichs as VP/Pres elect, Dr. Glenn Merchant as Secretary, and Drs. Mork, Veronneau, and Saenger to the Board of Governors.

Membership Committee: Dr. Peggy Barnes-Rivera chairs the membership committee. Her committee made a motion to extend "Founding Status" to all ASAMS Members, Associate Members, and Student/Resident Members who joined prior to the 2 December 1998 AsMA Council meeting at which ASAMS was recognized as a constituent organization. These "late" joiners contributed to ASAMS' membership roster and played a significant role in ASAMS being accepted as a constituent organization. This motion was passed unanimously.

Aeromedical Practice Standards Committee: The Committee chair is Dr. Dan Van Syoc. Dr. Warren Silberman, of AsMA's Education Committee, is the Committee's Co-Chair. Dr. Van Syoc reported on the committee's progress in developing aerospace medicine practice guidelines. At the time of the annual meeting nine diagnoses had been completed. [see Practice Guidelines later in this Newsletter for a complete update on this issue]

Treasurer's Report

Dr. Benjamin presented the treasurer's report which showed on 8 May 1999 a credit of \$2,060.78, a debit of \$65.75 (for checks, copying and postage) and an overall balance of \$1995.03.

ASAMS INITIATIVES

Practice Guidelines

ASAMS, in collaboration with AsMA, has taken on the task of developing practice guidelines for the specialty of aerospace medicine. Dr. Dan Van Syoc, Chairman of ASAMS' Aerospace Medicine Practice Standards and Competency Committee has been working with his Co-chair, Dr. Warren Silberman, of AsMA's Education Committee, in this endeavor and recruited many distinguished ASAMS members to help in the process. Currently this group has drafted 32 practice guidelines. These guidelines will be reviewed and approved by the Aerospace Medicine Practice Standards and Competency

Committee and then forwarded to ASAMS' Board of Governors for adoption as official policy. Once ASAMS' BOG has accepted them they are then presented to AsMA's Executive Committee for publication in Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine. Prior to being published in ASEM they will undergo the customary peer review process. If you would like to participate in this landmark effort, please contact Dr. Van Syoc or Dr. Silberman.

Scholarship Fund

One of the reasons for establishing ASAMS was to interest young physicians in the specialty of aerospace medicine. One of the most obvious ways that goal could be achieved would be through the establishment of a Scholarship Fund to support aerospace medicine training. However, ASAMS cannot support a scholarship program on its own using its current bare-bones dues structure.

Recognizing its limited resources ASAMS is proposing two immediate actions that could get it into the scholarship game quickly and provide a real service to the aerospace medicine community. The first is to ask you, ASAMS members, to voluntarily donate to an ASAMS scholarship fund. This fund would be established specifically to aid a physician in the pursuit of specialization in aerospace medicine. Your donation would be in addition to your normal ASAMS dues, and would be completely voluntary. The intent would be to use a portion of member's contributions each year to fund a scholarship and to use the remainder to build an annuity that would eventually be self-sustaining. A member may donate to the scholarship fund any amount they feel is appropriate. It is hoped that ASAMS could raise at least \$5000 each year towards a scholarship.

The second initiative is to increase the effectiveness of the ASAMS scholarship by combining forces with another organization also interested in providing aerospace medicine scholarships to physicians.

One group that already has a scholarship program targeted at physicians interested in aerospace medicine is the International Academy of Aviation and Space Medicine (ICASM). ICASM has annually presented a \$10,000 scholarship to a deserving physician pursuing

training in aerospace medicine. They have, however, recently run into funding problems and in 1999 were unable to offer their scholarship. Perhaps together ASAMS and ICASM could find funding stability for an aerospace medicine scholarship. ASAMS' Board of Governors will address this issue at their next meeting.

AsMA Fellow Issues

It is a sad fact that most physicians boarded in aerospace medicine will never become Fellows of AsMA. Physicians in other specialty areas expect to become Fellows in their specialty societies at some point in their careers. But AsMA's restrictions on the number of members who may become Fellows (half of 1% of the total membership) combined with an arcane selection process effectively blocks most aerospace medicine physicians from ever reaching Fellow.

Your president, Dr. Al Parmet, has been working this past year with the Chairman of AsMA's Fellows Group to reduce the inequities within the Fellows selection procedures. AsMA's Executive Committee has also passed a recommendation to increase the number of Fellows to 1% of the membership. This recommendation will be brought to AsMA's Council, and, if approved by Council, will then be brought before the full membership for ratification. Please support this effort.

FREIDA

Complaining about FREIDA has become something of a regular column in ASAMS' Newsletter. FREIDA is the American Medical Association's (AMA) Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Data Access web site. FREIDA touts itself as the single official AMA source of information on all U.S. medical residencies and fellowships.

In February 1999 ASAMS took the lead in organizing a consortium of preventive medicine groups such as AsMA, the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, the American Board of Preventive Medicine, the Preventive Medicine Residency Review Committee of the ACGME, and all four of the aerospace medicine residency programs to complain about the way in which FREIDA ignored the specialties of aerospace and

occupational medicine. As a result of that initiative Dr. Mike Scotti, Vice President for Education of the AMA, agreed to list aerospace and occupational medicine on the main menu list of FREIDA specialties. That change was to take effect in February 2000.

Well February 2000 has come and gone and the AMA did "fix" FREIDA by listing aerospace medicine and occupational medicine on FREIDA's main menu page. However, the search links associated with both these listings were dead-end links. Clicking on the aerospace medicine box to get more information resulted in a search which stated "There are no programs matching your search criteria." What the AMA had done was list aerospace medicine but then in parentheses direct the user to look under the heading "preventive medicine." Aerospace and occupational medicine are the only specialties listed on FREIDA which requires the user to look elsewhere on it's menu page. If you follow the directions to search under preventive medicine you will be confronted with a listing of eighty-seven (87) programs - none of which are identified as aerospace, occupational, or preventive medicine. Think how difficult it would be for a student looking for an aerospace medicine program to find one of the four offered within that list of 87 nondescript programs.

This is totally unacceptable. It's a disservice to aerospace, occupational, and general preventive medicine residency programs, as well as to the medical students and residents who are trying to find these programs. The promised "fix" to FREIDA by Dr. Mike Scotti, Vice President for Education of the AMA, is unacceptable.

Aerospace Medicine and Occupational Medicine are both recognized as medical specialties under the American Board of Medical Specialties, both have required examinations for certification, and both have ACGME accredited residencies. To treat these specialties as second class citizens on FREIDA is a travesty.

The ONLY acceptable action by the AMA is to list aerospace medicine and occupational medicine residencies as independent free-standing programs and not lump them together with preventive medicine. Aerospace medicine must be listed with its four ACGME accredited programs clearly demarcated as aerospace medicine programs. Occupational medicine

should be similarly listed. Lumping these two specialties under preventive medicine is a disservice to FRIEDA's customers and residency programs involved with these educational efforts.

ASAMS will continue to push for resolution of this oversight. You may check out FREIDA for yourself at:

<http://www.ama-assn.org/cgi-bin/freida/freida.cgi>

NEWS FROM THE AMERICAN BOARD OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

The ABPM is requesting each of its diplomats to provide ABPM with their current mailing address, and contact numbers. Diplomats may send their updates directly to the ABPM at:

American Board of Preventive Medicine
9950 West Lawrence Avenue, Suite 106
Schiller Park, IL 60176.

If you prefer you may also update this information directly on the ABPM web page. This service should be available beginning in April 2000. The ABPM web page address is: <http://www.abprevmed.org>

ABPM reported that 37 individuals challenged the aerospace medicine boards in November of 1999. The overall pass rate was 78.38% with an 80% pass rate for those who completed an aerospace medicine residency. Congratulations to all those who passed and a reminder that you are now eligible for full membership in ASAMS. Simply complete the membership update form attached to this Newsletter along with your \$10.00 dues and enjoy fully the fruits of your labors.

Those residents who plan to challenge the aerospace medicine boards this next November (13 Nov 2000 to be exact) are encouraged to visit the ABPM web site to obtain the year 2000 application forms. The forms have been changed significantly since last year and using an outdated form will only slow the application process.

Aerospace medicine specialists who are asked to write letters of reference for physicians applying for the Board examination are asked to review and abide by the ABPM's instructions for these letters. The letters of reference are very important to the Board's application process and

letters written in compliance with the instructions will greatly help in the Board's deliberations. Applicants should provide copies of the Board's instructions to anyone they've asked to write a letter of reference.

Those diplomats who received their board certification after 1997 are already aware that their certificates are now time-limited to ten years. The ABPM has established two pathways leading to recertification. The diplomat may simply retake the ABPM examination or they may elect to participate in a series of educational modules and forego the examination entirely. To succeed in recertifying via educational modules the diplomat will need to satisfactorily complete five modules prior to the expiration of his or her time-limited certificate. Each module is equivalent to forty hours of effort. At the ABPM's winter meeting it approved the first four educational modules. The four modules are:

Global Medicine	USAF School of Aerospace Medicine
Aerospace Medicine Current Practices	University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston
Occupational and Environmental Medicine: Self Assessment Review & a Practical Approach to Occupational and Environmental Med.	American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine
Practical Aspects of Management	Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and Environmental Health

More information on each of these modules may be obtained from the ABPM web site.

AEROSPACE MEDICINE NATIONAL CURRICULUM MEETING

On October 18, 1999 representatives from all four of the U.S. aerospace medicine residency programs met in Galveston, Texas to discuss issues related to aerospace medicine education. The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston served as host for the meeting. The attendees, all ASAMS members, included:

Dr. Nick Davenport, NAMI
Dr. Jeff Davis, UTMB
Dr. Robin Dodge, Wright State U.

Dr. Richard Jennings, UTMB
Dr. Mike Mork, USAFSAM
Dr. Romie Richardson, USAFSAM
Dr. Mike Valdez, NAMI

What follows is an outline of the meeting's minutes, provided by Dr. Jeff Davis.

1. Aerospace Medicine training requirements
 - a. Issues
 - i) Employers want graduates with more clinical abilities
 - ii) State licensing – may require 3 years of ACGME accredited training
 - iii) Previous ABPM and RRC strategic planning wanted to have 2 practicum years as the training requirement for preventive medicine
 - iv) Equivalency pathway ended with requirement of residency training after graduation from medical school 1/1/84
 - v) Practice year dropped by the ABPM for certification requirement
 - vi) Trainees not accepted by ABPM without ACGME accredited clinical year
 - vii) Funding – PM residencies are not considered as primary care and do not receive Medicare DME or IME funding
 - viii) Many PM residencies have had to engage employers/clients as funding sources
 - ix) Recent development of accredited “On-job, On-campus” residencies where a didactic/experience component is added to an employment situation and the individual receives residency credit
 - b. Consensus findings
 - i) 4 years of GME education is required for adequate preventive medicine licensing and training
 - ii) A model needs to be developed that allows customization of training for different employer/client groups and unique funding relationships
 - iii) The academic year sets the specialty apart as “population based medicine” from its clinical colleagues
 - iv) No equivalency pathway should be re-instated by the ABPM or RRC
 - v) Admission of DO's is an ongoing issue and should be addressed by the RRC and ABPM
 - vi) All preventive medicine requirements for all 4 years should be considered as

competencies, whether in clinical, academic or practicum years (old terminology)

2. New, proposed training approach for Preventive Medicine (aerospace medicine)
 - a. Require 48 months of clinical, population and specialty-based competencies
 - i) Minimum of 12 months of clinical
 - ii) Minimum of 12 months of population
 - iii) Minimum of 12 months of specialty
 - iv) Additional 12 months of clinical, population or specialty
 - b. Advantages
 - i) Permits multiple approaches to constructing programs within currently available funding
3. Plan
 - a. Review and comment by November 8
 - b. Submit to RRC and ABPM as a leadership position to require more training, embrace the competency format of training, and allow customization of training based on employers, clients and funding

CALL FOR ASAMS GRAPHIC

We've only had one graphic submitted for consideration as an icon for ASAMS. We are grateful to Dr. Leroy Gross for taking the time to submit an entry. We would like to place a selection of graphics before the membership at the Houston meeting in May so they may select one to represent ASAMS. Please, if you have any artistic skills at all, try your hand at knocking out a symbol ASAMS can use to identify itself. Even the crudest draft submission would be welcomed. Please forward your submission to Dr. Mike Mork or any of ASAMS officers.

CALL FOR DUES

One of the facts of life is that it takes money to sustain an organization and ASAMS is no different in that regard. Currently less than one third of the membership has paid its dues through May of 2000. Come on. It's only ten bucks at worst (five for some). Most of that money is used to copy and mail out the newsletter. Take the time right now to fill out a check to ASAMS, update your contact and membership status, and put it in the mail today. While you're at it, why not make it out for two years worth of dues then you won't have to think about it again until May 2001. Thanks.

RECRUIT MEMBERS

ASAMS membership peaked at just over 200 prior to last May's membership meeting in Detroit. There has been very little gain since that time. Please, contact your aerospace medicine peers and get them to join. An application form is included with this Newsletter.

CALL FOR NOMINEES FOR ASAMS OFFICE

At the annual membership meeting in Houston in May ASAMS will select new officers. If you have an interest in directing this new organization or want a greater say in the specialty of aerospace medicine then put your name in the hat to become an officer. Dr. Richard Jennings is the Chair of the nominating committee. He'd like to hear from you. Dr. Jennings' e-mail address is rjennin@utmb.edu

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The next ASAMS membership meeting will be held in conjunction with the Annual Scientific Meeting of AsMA at the Westin Galleria, Houston, Texas. The meeting will be on Thursday, 18 May 2000, beginning at 7:30 am. Check your AsMA meeting schedule for the specific room assignment.

At the annual meeting we will select new officers for ASAMS.

Officers to be elected at the May 2000 meeting:
Vice President (president elect)
Treasurer (two year term)
Board of Governors (three year term)

Officers remaining in office:
President (elect): Dr. Chris Heinrichs
Secretary: Dr. Glenn Merchant
Board of Governors (May 2002): Dr. Mike Mork
Board of Governors (May 2001): Dr. Steve Veronneau

Officers leaving office in May 00:
President: Dr. Al Parmet
Treasurer: Dr. Chris Benjamin
Board of Governors (May 2000): Dr. Arleen Saenger

ASAMS TOP PRIORITIES

Publishing the first of the aerospace medicine practice guidelines in ASEM.

Establishing a web site for ASAMS.

Energizing the membership will be an ongoing effort. We must keep the members we have and recruit new ones if ASAMS is to remain a viable force in the politics of specialized medicine.

The drivers that motivated the establishment of the American College of Aerospace Medicine and it's subsequent development into the American Society of Aerospace Medicine Specialists remain viable and worthwhile goals:

- 1) establishment of standards for the specialty of ASM,
- 2) promotion of the interests of physicians who specialize in ASM,
- 3) promoting and preserving the highest professional standards of care among ASM practitioners, and
- 4) striving to interest young physicians and potential employers in the specialty of ASM.

SEE YOU IN HOUSTON!

**NOW WOULD
BE A GREAT
TIME TO PAY
YOUR DUES.
PLEASE!**

Disclaimer: the opinions, interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the Officers of ASAMS and are not necessarily endorsed by the DoD, U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, FAA, ABPM, or AsMA.