

Meeting at Lake of the Ozarks a Big Success

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Governor, Missouri Chapter

The 2001 Missouri Chapter Meeting was held September 14-16 in a lovely setting at Tan Tar A in Osage Beach with great weather. Mark your calendar for September 20-22, 2002 to attend next year's meeting. The Education Committee has another strong and varied program planned.

The meeting provided a wide array of topics in medicine and excellent speakers on Pulmonology, Critical Care, Rheumatology, Neurology, Orthopedics, Psychiatry, and Dermatology. There was a very good presentation on board recertification provided by William Golden, MD, FACP, a Regent of the College from Arkansas. At the luncheon meeting on Saturday, September 15, a series of awards were given.

The Laureate Award was given to Alan D. Forker, MD, FACP, FACC, who has been very active in this Chapter for many years and is a highly regarded teacher. Dr Forker started Missouri's Annual Reading Retreat and has the next one scheduled for February 2002. Dr Forker's career was outlined by Jay Morris, MD, MACP a former Governor of Missouri and a former Regent of the College.

The Internist of the Year Award was bestowed upon Norman P. Knowlton III, MD, FACP. Dr Knowlton has been very active in private practice of Internal Medicine in Springfield and is currently President of the Missouri State Medical Association.

Dr Golden presented the Missouri Chapter with the 2001 Chapter Excellence Award from the College. This award recognizes state Chapters that exceed basic standards set for the Chapters.

The Missouri Chapter sponsored a poster presentation program for Associates to report their investigative work. There are two categories: Clinical Vignettes and Basic Research. The winner in each category from the Missouri Chapter is funded to go to the College Meeting and present their work. This year, the first prize in the Research category was awarded Vikas Agarwal, MD, University of Missouri, Kansas City.

The judges ended up with a 3-way tie for first place in the Clinical Vignette section. All three of these young people were therefore awarded a first place prize: Dr Dinesh Kumar from St. Luke's Hospital, Dr Milton Sallis from St. Mary's Health Center, and Drs Bing Ho and Mysore Onifade from Washington University School of Medicine.

The Missouri Chapter, under the direction of the Council, presented a check to the ACP-ASIM Foundation, which was accepted on behalf of the Foundation by the College Regent, William Golden, MD, FACP. The check was for \$2,092 representing a one-dollar donation for each Member of the Missouri Chapter.

On Sunday morning the combined Town Hall - Business Meeting was held for the Chapter. Many members voiced their concerns, areas of interest, and suggestions. An especially hot

topic was Recertification, which was also discussed on Saturday. This was an excellent forum and all Members are urged to get on the Chapter website (<http://www.acp-asim-missouri.org>) and communicate with Chapter leaders.

This was an excellent meeting that provided up to 13.5 CME credits, in addition to the camaraderie that has become characteristic of the Missouri Chapter. It should be mentioned that from the beginning to the end of this conference, we all were deeply aware of the tragic events this past week that occurred in New York City and Washington, D.C. The Chapter provided lapel ribbons, which were worn throughout the conference. There was ample time for reflection, and I believe, a degree of catharsis. As difficult this was for all of us, it did seem appropriate in an effort to maintain normalcy and at the same time, allow time for relief from the usual daily stresses, and reflection on our hopes for the future.

A note for those who have not attended the Chapter meeting: This is a wonderful opportunity to meet and converse with College leadership. Present at this year's meeting were: Sara Walker, MD, MACP ACP-ASIM President-Elect; Jay Morris, MD, MACP former Governor and former College Regent, Clif Cleveland, MD, MACP former Regent, former ACP President and author of Sacred Space; and of course our College rep, Bill Golden, MD, FACP. Both of the current candidates for Governor-Elect for the Missouri Chapter were present: Jean Chapman, MD, MACP - Cape Girardeau and Anne Winkler, MD, PhD, FACP - Springfield.

Students Recognized for Achievement

The Missouri Chapter every year bestows a series of awards to medical students. This year to graduating seniors who are at the top of their class, specifically with excellent achievement in Internal Medicine, the Missouri ACP-ASIM Book Award was presented. This particular award includes a certificate and also a check for the purpose of purchasing a suitable medical textbook that would in turn be inscribed with the name of the student winner, but also a Member of the College from that student's medical school as an honoree. The winners from the 4 schools involved are: Ethan Korngold of Washington University; Brian Seek of University of Missouri, Columbia; Alex Chen of University of Missouri, Kansas City; and Jason Schroeder of Saint Louis University.

The Clerkship Award is given to a junior student at the end of that year of training specifically for meritorious performance during an Internal Medicine Clerkship. This year's winners were: Hannah Wunsch of Washington University; Marla Brookings of University of Missouri, Columbia; Janna Ver Dught of University of Missouri, Kansas City; and Clinton J. Baird of Saint Louis University.

The Physical Diagnosis Award is given to the student from each school who scores very high on Physical Diagnosis and Introduction to Medicine type courses. The winners this year were: Janet Moore of Saint Louis University; Mark Hamblin of University of Missouri, Columbia; Kevin Baszis of University of Missouri, Kansas City and Li Ern Chen of Washington University.

ACP-ASIM Leadership Day-Washington DC

William M. Fogarty, Jr., MD, FACP

Carl Strauss, MD, FACP and I were among about 125 ACP-ASIM members from all over the country and many staff members who met in Washington to learn about and discuss the issues, which are under deliberation by the Congress. Most of the briefing time was spent on the following issues and Bills:

1. **Access to care:** The REACH (Relief, Equity, Access and Coverage for Health) Act, S. 590, is designed to help low-to-moderate income families buy health insurance. The mechanism to accomplish this would be by the provision of advance payment of a refundable, targeted tax credit of \$2500 to families who earn up to \$55,000 and \$1000 to individuals who earn up to \$35,000. For low wage earners whose employers furnish partial payment for insurance, a credit would be made to cover the employees' portion of the cost.
2. **Patient Protection:** The Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001, S. 283/H.R. 526. This bill includes important elements such as an effective and timely appeals mechanism, the right of individuals to hold managed care plans accountable in a court of law for harm caused by managed care decisions (while protecting employers from liability for the plan's decisions) and mandates that health plan decisions will be based on professional standards of appropriateness rather than the plan's own criteria.
3. **Medicare Hassle Reduction:** The Medicare Education and Regulatory Relief Act (MERFA), S. 452/H.R. 868, would reform Medicare rule making and promulgation, bill paying and auditing practices. The power of Medicare to investigate fraud would remain in place but would be tempered by a requirement that Medicare educate physicians about regulations so as to avoid inadvertent billing mistakes.
4. **Patient Safety:** In response to the IOM report on patient care errors and patient injuries, the College is asking increased funding for the Center for Quality Improvement and Patient Safety within the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). They are also advocating voluntary, confidential reporting of incidents that do not result in fatalities or major errors, analogous to that in place in the airline industry.
5. **Medicare modernization and prescription drug benefit:** There are now and will be many more proposals to reform Medicare and provide a prescription drug benefit within Medicare. The College has a number of recommendations to guide the debate. We were asked to oppose all attempts to convert Medicare into a defined contribution rather than a defined benefit plan. Prescription drug benefits should be added to the program only if there is sustained, reliable funding for that benefit and, at least in the short run, on a need basis. Senate Bill 357, introduced by Bill Frist (R-TN) and John Breaux (D-LA) would convert Medicare to a combined contribution plan and is drawing strong opposition from the College.
6. **Funding for Health Programs:** Medical and Nursing Education depend on funding from Titles VII and VIII. The College is advocating increased funding for these programs over the next two years. The AHRQ should have additional funding to promote patient safety, health care quality and the development of health outcomes information. The VA medical and prosthetics research budget should be

increased to allow increased research on a number of chronic and debilitating illnesses.

We were briefed by a number of experts from the College and the Washington community including Bob Doherty, staffers from a number of congressmen and think-tank members. We also heard from Stuart Rothenberg, a political writer and CNN television commentator, and Senator Bill Frist (R-TN) and Representative Shelly Berkley (D-NV) with informative and entertaining commentary on the Washington scene and the prospects for successful passage of some of the issues which are outlined above.

I would like to urge that more Missouri members of the ACP-ASIM become Key Contacts for the College, keep themselves informed about the issues on the state and national levels and contact legislators with their opinions on these issues. Look into ACPOnline (<http://www.acponline.org>) to bring yourself up to date on these issues. Let your voice be heard. It is crucial for our patients and our profession that you do so.

Third Annual Reading Retreat Scheduled for February 22-24

Your Missouri Chapter of the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine will again sponsor a Reading Retreat at Big Cedar Lodge outside of Branson.

Having seen this event succeed in other states, Alan Forker, MD, FACP has initiated Missouri's own Reading Retreat for physicians and their spouses. Discussions are centered on advance readings, plays and movies. Jennifer Martin, PhD, a theater professor from UMKC, acts as the discussion facilitator.

Contact Dr. Forker for additional information at (816-932-5797) or (aforker@saint-lukes.org). Big Cedar reservations may be made by calling (417-335-2777). A detailed agenda will soon be available on the Chapter website at (<http://www.acp-asim-missouri.org>)

Fellowship Tutorials Continue

In October, the Missouri Chapter held five Fellowship Tutorials in St Louis, Cape Girardeau, Springfield, Kansas City, and Columbia. The primary purpose is to communicate the message that Fellowship may now be attained by a combination of four pathways: written medical communication, certification activity and teaching, active participation in ACP-ASIM, and teaching, patient care and professional service over many years. If you are interested in learning more about Fellowship contact Carl Strauss, MD, FACP, Chair of the Credentials Committee at (cstraussmd@aol.com) or Pat Mills at (pmills@sprintmail.com).

Resident Poster Competition Breaks New Ground

The Missouri Chapter Poster Competition had two remarkable firsts: one-all entrants were submitted online and two-there was a three-way tie for first in the Clinical Vignette category. Fifty-six posters were entered in the contest, which was judged on Friday evening, September 14 during the Missouri Chapter meeting. Award Winners for Year 2001:

Research

First prize: Vikas Agarwal, MD, University of Missouri, Kansas City, "Omega 3 Fatty Acids: Effect on Cytokine Profile in Heart Transplant Patients"

Second prize: Amit Joshi, University of Missouri, Kansas City, "Do cardiovascular deaths still lead the national mortality statistics? The truth behind the numbers"

Third prize: Faisal Hasan, Saint Louis University, "Effects of Chronic Neutral Endopeptidase Inhibition on Hypertrophic Remodeling in LV Pressure Overload"

Clinical Vignette - Unprecedented 3-way tie for 1st Place

Dinesh Kumar, MD, St. Luke's Hospital, "First Case Report of Combined Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) and Gitelman's Syndrome (GS) in a Family: Is There a Genetic Linkage?"
Milton Sallis MD, St. Mary's Health Center, "Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV) hepatitis in an immunocompetent patient-A rare, fatal but treatable disease when recognized by a pentad of findings"

Bing Ho, MD, MPH; & Moyosore K. Onifade, MD; Washington University, Barnes-Jewish Hospital, "A case of pulmonary and CNS Strongyloides stercoralis hyperinfection"

Transition-Childhood To Adult

Many of us have had at least a little experience dealing with a young person who has need of long-term medical management. In many instances, they have been very closely followed by Pediatricians, Pediatric Subspecialists, nursing organizations and in some cases by subspecialty groups. The changeover to adult care can at times be quite difficult and yet, it is very important.

My own personal experience with this process of transition centers around management of adults who have congenital cardiovascular disease. It is clear that improvements in diagnosis and management, have led to a marked increase in survival and also longevity for patients, even those with complex cardiovascular defects. Thus, there are an increasing number of children and adolescents who will become patients of Internal Medicine physicians and subspecialists. In some cases, there has been a very smooth plan with the parents, the child and the health care organization, that has made the transition to adulthood and adult management fairly smooth. In other instances, there is a serious need for a carefully planned transition.

The most dramatic example of how transition can be extremely difficult, in my experience, has been the young woman who has congenital cardiovascular disease, and who has been meticulously followed in a Pediatric Clinic or Hospital, but who, because of pregnancy is abruptly transferred to an adult type facility. There are other less obvious examples of poor transition, and therefore, a need for some definite plan for each pediatric patient with a medical or surgical problem that will require long-term follow-up.

In November 2000, a transition listserv was started for all those interested in this fairly broad topic. It was initiated by John G. Reiss, PhD, Director, Policy and Program Affairs, Institute for Child Health Policy, 5700 S. W. 34th Street, Suite 323, Gainesville, Florida 32608. This listserv has blossomed into well more than 400 members and continues to grow. Examples of problems that have been specifically mentioned in this transition listserv include, spina

bifida, cystic fibrosis, bipolar disorder, autism, eating disorders, ulcerative colitis, visual impairment and speech/language disorders. One might easily also include diabetes, asthma, sickle cell disease, hemophilia, post traumatic brain injury or various forms of cancer.

Some of our members are trained and boarded in both medicine and pediatrics. I would presume they are very well equipped to manage a patient through this transition from childhood to adult. They may still require some subspecialty assistance that means the child will be faced, as will his or her parents, with a complete change of medical personnel. It is therefore, quite appropriate for us to consider working closely with pediatric and adolescent medical groups to formulate appropriate management plans for the large number of young people who will grow into adulthood with some disease, management problem, or residual. Interested parties could look at the transition site, (<http://mchenet.ichp.edu/scripts/lyris.pl?enter=transition>).

ACP-ASIM Email Campaign

ACP-ASIM wants your email address. In an effort to ensure that you receive urgent health communications from the College, go to (http://www.acponline.org/college/aboutacp/email_change.htm) and submit your current email address. ACP-ASIM will not sell or share your e-mail address and will ensure the judicious use of your e-mail address.

Bioterrorism Resource Center

The September 11 terrorist attacks precipitated a wave of concern about the possibility of bioterrorism-the use of germs and chemicals as weapons of mass taking of lives. In recent weeks, the concerns have become a reality with the onslaught of Anthrax cases. In an effort to educate physicians and provide up-to-date information on biological terrorism, ACP-ASIM has developed the Bioterrorism Resource Center on the College website (<http://www.acponline.org/bioterro/>).

The information featured in the Bioterrorism Resource Center is broken down into the following sections:

Therapeutic Recommendations for Exposure to or Disease Caused by Biological Weapons - Up-to-date recommendations from the CDC and other organizations regarding treatment, exposure, research, etc.

- **Essential Medical Knowledge** - General medical knowledge on biological and chemical weapons
- **News** - Current events and news releases regarding bioterrorism.
- **Additional Resources** - Helpful resources to assist in the gathering of information on bioterrorism; websites, journals, recordings, speakers.
- **College Activities** - ACP-ASIM initiatives and efforts to aid physicians in the battle against biological and chemical threats.

ACP-ASIM encourages all physicians to visit the Bioterrorism Resource Center often, as physicians are the first line of defense against bioterrorism. It is the intent of the College to be a comprehensive resource for the medical community on biological and chemical threats in an effort to prevent the sense of alarm and panic.

Education and preparation are key components in promoting an efficient, expeditious approach to bioterrorism. Visit the Bioterrorism Resource Center (<http://www.acponline.org/bioterro/index.html>) and join ACP-ASIM in the campaign to promote a "Don't panic, prepare" campaign against bioterrorism.

End Of Life Care Patient Education Brochures And Doctors Tip Sheet Available

In September, the Center for Ethics and Professionalism inaugurated its Patient Education and Caring: End-of-Life (PEACE) Series by releasing three patient education brochures designed to guide patients through various stages of palliative and end-of-life care. The brochures offer clearly worded advice for patients and caregivers and are suitable for distribution in doctor's offices. The available brochures are:

- "When You Have Pain at the End of Life"
- "Living with a Serious Illness: Talking to your Doctor When the Future is Uncertain"
- "Making Medical Decisions for a Loved One at the End of Life"

Also available is "Improving Your End of Life Care Practice," a tip sheet for doctors, with suggestions on how to identify patients who would benefit from the brochures and tips on how to "break the ice" in face-to-face discussions about sensitive end-of-life issues.

The patient brochures are available at no charge in packages of 50 each from the Center (call 800-523-1546, ext. 2839 or e-mail ssmith@mail.acponline.org); they can also be accessed in PDF format at (http://www.acponline.org/ethics/pated_project.htm).