

President's Page

Colleagues....Friends

Standing in front of you at our Scientific Meeting this past May, having accepted the gavel as your new President...well, it is hard to believe that my journey to this point began more than 30 years ago when, as a student, I attended my very first AsMA meeting (I believe that it was held at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC). It has been quite a splendid and always exciting adventure since then, indeed, for which I have so many of you, dear friends and colleagues, to thank. I am most humbled by your recognition and deeply honored by your trust.

For this, my first journal page as AsMA President, I would like to set out my vision of where I believe that we should journey during this coming year and beyond.

An international perspective; a global network. AsMA is an international organization; 676 of our members now represent 75 nations. That is, approximately 23 % of our total members are from countries other than the United States. We conduct three international panels (French, German and Spanish) at our annual Scientific Meeting (I hope to expand this in the future), have a very active International Members Committee, a highly popular International Member's reception each year, and can proudly call many non-U.S. professional aeromedical associations AsMA Affiliates. We have also had non-U.S. members play central roles on the AsMA Council, Executive Committee, and as President. It is my goal that AsMA should vigorously expand this international perspective in the following ways: 1.) by promoting recruitment of non-U.S. members as actively as we do for U.S. members, concentrating on those countries either under-represented or not represented at all in our membership; 2.) by providing incentives for non-U.S. young members to join AsMA, participate on committees and attend our annual meetings; and 3.) by working jointly with our non-U.S. counterpart organizations to foster joint activities, products (i.e., position papers, policies and standards, etc.) and professional meetings.

All members as active participants. Involvement is the key! Volunteer. There is a perception that most of our members join merely to receive the 'Blue Journal' and attend the annual meeting; that only a rather small core group of members actually actively take part in governing, organizing and running the myriad activities of the association. My intention is to dispel that notion; to get as many of our members to become actively involved in AsMA's functions. For example, everyone can (and should) be a promoter of and recruiter for AsMA. All of our members should consider joining a committee, volunteering to lead or participate in an activity, or to just assist in any way possible. It is so fulfilling to be able to make a difference in the life of our society, and I will be continually urging all of our members to do just that.

Expand membership to encompass under-represented specialties. We are an umbrella society, encompassing a plethora of specialties in aerospace medicine and human factors. However, I note that a number of medical, human factors, nursing and allied health science professionals tend to become members of professional societies other than AsMA, organizations that are perceived as better oriented to serve their own specialties. It is my goal to turn around that trend to go elsewhere, to ensure all that they have indeed a professional home at AsMA. We have long fostered involvement from all spe-



Andrew H. Bellenkes, Ph.D.

cialties of aeromedicine and human factors. Yet, I would like to further let potential members know that AsMA can serve them well. A recent success story in this regard was the presentation in New Orleans of the special panel on Augmented Cognition; a specialty only recently created. Yet, it has already attracted many members from around the world. It is my intent to bring our colleagues in Aug Cog as well as other unrepresented areas into the AsMA fold.

Responsibility to be mentors. Our recent attempt to create an active Mentorship program has met with...well..an underwhelming response. However, I am convinced that the best way to recruit and keep new members is by offering them the opportunity to interact with members who have been with the association for some time. All of us who have been with AsMA should become mentors to a new member; to help that colleague to become acquainted with the organization, what it offers professionally and personally, and how it all works. If it were not for Dr. Rolly Shamburek, who did this for me when I first joined AsMA (those many centuries ago!), it is possible that I may not have remained an active member. I will therefore be hounding many of our members to take on the role as mentors, and will investigate the possibility of resurrecting the current program in another form.

It is my intent to **update the AsMA Policy and Procedures Manual**--a critical task in the governance of this association. Too many of our processes remain undocumented and informal at best. By administratively codifying our policies and procedures, we will be better able to standardize our processes to the point that they will be enduring, replicable and enforceable (by defining accountability). This process will also involve a "clean up" of the association's by-laws; removing those items that should be encompassed by the manual into the latter document.

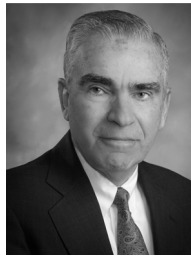
Create a "President's Roundtable". This is to be an 'informal' experience-based consultancy, if you will, whose role it will be to provide the President (upon his request) with senior-level counsel. The President's Roundtable will not play any roles in AsMA governance or management; rather, it will be a means for the President to discuss issues with those who have come before as President.

Executive Director transition. As you know, Dr. Russell Rayman will soon be retiring after more than 15 years as AsMA

See *PRESIDENT'S PAGE*, p. 640.

Association News

Executive Director's Column



Rayman

AsMA & Public Affairs

Your Association has approximately 90 position papers and resolutions on record that have been approved over the past 15 years. These instruments of policy address an extremely broad range of issues relevant to aerospace medicine and it is upon these documents that your Executive Director articulates AsMA policy to the public. Over the years these position papers and resolutions have served us extremely well in that they underwrite our international leadership in aerospace medicine. They also demonstrate forethought to the issues before they have surfaced. It is for that reason that AsMA must stay ahead of the game by anticipating our challenges, formulating our policies, and publishing them.

Calls from the public sector come from radio stations, the TV networks, and newspapers. Responding to the media does have its risks in that one could readily be misquoted or taken out of context. This is especially true for newspaper interviews and media interviews that are pretaped because writers and editors have the opportunity to make any editorial changes without necessarily consulting the interviewee. On the other hand, if the radio/TV interview is live, the danger is much less in that the interviewee can readily explain anything without fear of editorial changes.

During my 16 years as your Executive Director, there have been times when we have been misquoted or the interviewer had given more emphasis where it was not intended. This, in my opinion, has never been done with any dark, ulterior motives. In my experience, the misquotes were inaccurate because the interviewee did not know the subject well or because the statements made were simply misinterpreted. There is no question that every organization, including government officials at one time or another, becomes alarmed because of misquotes or errors perpetrated by the writers and editors. As I said, I do not believe that such examples, in our experience at least, are intentional.

In order to keep these misadventures to a minimum, the interviewee must be very cautious in choice of words and have a full understanding of the subject at hand. This is why it is so important that we have position papers and resolutions prepared, approved, and in the hopper.

Although we always run the risk of being misquoted, we must not be deterred by fear.

As the international leader in aerospace medicine, we are obligated to stand up and be heard whenever the call comes. That's what leaders do.

PRESIDENT'S PAGE, from p. 639.

Executive Director. The process for selecting his successor is currently underway. Russell has shone as our 'Man in Washington', garnering much praise for his expert representation of AsMA both in the U.S. and abroad. He has graciously agreed to facilitate the pass-down process to his successor, to make this critical transition period as seamless as possible. I look forward to working with Dr. Rayman during this upcoming year and will keep our membership updated on the selection process.

Now, as I embark on this heady opportunity to serve you as President, might I take a moment to express my deepest thanks to Dr. Jack Hastings, who mentored me so well through my year as President-Elect. The consummate caring professional that he is, Dr. Hastings' countless outstanding contributions to AsMA have resulted in a legacy for which he can be very proud indeed. My sincerest thanks go also to Dr. Rayman and his splendid staff at AsMA Headquarters whose boundless patience and generosity have helped me to better understand how AsMA really works.

I look so much forward during this upcoming year, to working very closely with the many distinguished members that make up the AsMA Executive Committee, Council, Constituent and Affiliate organizations, our splendid WING and to the wonderful staffs of both AsMA headquarters and the 'Blue Journal'. Mostly, I look so much forward to getting to know, serve and work with all of you, the life's blood of AsMA....its members.

It is to be an exciting time of change indeed. The path ahead that we shall take will not always remain smooth. Yet I am confident that, with your help, we will have one of the best years yet.

Aerospace Medical Association Seeks Executive Director

The Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA) is seeking applicants for the position of Executive Director. The Executive Director serves as the chief operating officer responsible for all management, administration and professional activities of the Association. Applicants should possess a doctoral degree and be familiar with the AsMA. Major responsibilities include membership services, planning and conducting an annual scientific meeting, publishing a scientific journal, and conducting liaison with related national and international organizations. Salary will be commensurate with these responsibilities and the experience of the applicant. Applications should include a 1- to 2-page narrative describing interest, professional qualifications, and vision for the Association. Also include a professional resume, salary history, and salary requirements. A position description may be obtained by calling (301) 469-5461. Mail applications to: Robert R. McMeekin, M.D, Chair, Search Committee, 7435 Arrowood Road, Bethesda, MD 20817-2822.

Journal CME/MOC

We have suspended publishing the CME/MOC questions in the journal until further notice due to insufficient participation in the program.

AME 2008 Seminar Schedule

June 02-06	Oklahoma City, OK	BASIC*
August 01-03	Washington, DC	CARDIO†
November 03-07	Oklahoma City, OK	BASIC*
November 14-16	Reno, NV	NPN†

AP/HF = Aviation Physiology/Human Factors Theme

CARDIO = Cardiology Theme

OOE = Ophthalmology - Otolaryngology - Endocrinology Theme

N/NP/P = Neurology/Neuro-Psychology/Psychiatry Theme

The Civil Aerospace Medical Institute is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to sponsor continuing medical education for physicians.

* A 4½-day basic AME seminar focused on preparing physicians to be designated as Aviation Medical Examiners. Call your regional flight surgeon.

† A 2½-day theme AME seminar consisting of 12 hours of Aviation Medical Examiner-specific subjects plus 8 hours of subjects related to a designated theme. Registration must be made through the Oklahoma City AME Program staff: (405) 954-4258 / 4830.