

## An Honor to Serve

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It has been an honor to serve as President of the Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA) this past year!

My final President's Page is required in March for a May publication, likely in print as we begin the Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) in Chicago. As I pen this page, I wish to provide some observations, highlights, and share some "thank you's" and kudos.

I first became a member of AsMA in 1985 as a Student Naval Flight Surgeon and recall attending my first Annual meeting the next year in Nashville. I was a wide-eyed new attendee in awe of the scope of the program offered and the range of aerospace medicine professionals I met. The welcoming mentorship of former Executive Director Dr. Russell Rayman took me on a path to embrace AsMA and serve the organization in the years ahead in a multitude of roles and leadership positions. It has been a *labor of love* for me to have done so. I have been constantly impressed with the value and importance of *what you all do*, and will continue to do, in the arena of aerospace medicine, human performance, health, and safety.

As AsMA approaches the upcoming Annual Scientific Meeting in Chicago, we are very encouraged that the early rising trend of advanced registrations and hotel room bookings suggest a large number of attendees will be present to share professional knowledge and camaraderie. I greatly look forward to the outstanding guest speakers slated for the Armstrong Lecture, Reinartz Panel, and Bauer Lecture. A record number of abstracts for the Annual Scientific Meeting were submitted this past fall. The Scientific Program Committee (SPC), under the leadership of Dr. Eilis Boudreau, has worked arduously to help develop a solid scientific program. I thank the SPC for their many volunteer hours in doing so and for their upcoming efforts to address areas of improvement to guide abstract submitters and enhance the remote and in-person abstract review hybrid process.

The Home Office staff, led by our Executive Director, Jeff Svntek, are truly an outstanding group to work with. Their professionalism, devotion to the organization, and desire to serve our membership is truly heartfelt. A special thank you to Jeff, my "fellow colleague from Upstate New York", with whom I have had countless phone calls and virtual meetings throughout the year addressing issues for the organization. Your friendship and dedication to AsMA has always been appreciated and valued.

Thank you to the support and service of our Vice Presidents, Executive Committee members, Council members, Committee Chairs and members, and all our Constituents and Affiliates. Corporate sponsor membership is very much appreciated as these organizations support and value the mission of AsMA.

I thank the prior Past Presidents for their service to AsMA and their words of wisdom as I strove to shepherd and advance our

organization. The *Aerospace Medicine and Human Performance* (AMHP) journal continues to remain an excellent publication and has smoothly transitioned into the digital print journal era. We have welcomed Dr. David Newman as the new AMHP Editor-in-Chief and are grateful for the years of outstanding work and guidance by Dr. Fred Bonato. Our organization's financial trajectory is doing very well as we exited the challenges of the COVID pandemic with solid planning and financial decisions having been made by our Executive Committee, Council, and Executive Director.

Thank you to Drs. Jeff Davis and Kris Belland as they have stepped up to lead the AsMA Ad Hoc Working Group on Aerospace Medicine Training. The Working Group's efforts are to thoroughly evaluate and recommend, in concert with input from the Education and Training Committee, the best and most appropriate pathways for future Aerospace Medicine practitioners as career opportunities unfold in the years ahead.

As I shared in a prior correspondence, AsMA and the Undersea & Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS) have been actively engaged in exploring and defining the most practical steps toward shared services and increased collaboration between the two organizations, which could greatly enhance our collective value to members and strengthen our scientific educational forums. During the spring 2024 Executive Committee (EXCOM) meeting in Texas, the UHMS Executive Director and President-Elect joined EXCOM in person for an entire day dedicated to continued evaluation of the many facets of such engagement. A Collaborations Committee, with four leadership members each from AsMA and UHMS has been established to continue the effort. A full briefing on progress made and issues identified will be presented at the May Council meeting in Chicago. Hopefully you are already aware that beginning with the 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting in Atlanta, AsMA and UHMS will hold a joint meeting for the foreseeable future. We are confident such an outstanding interaction will offer many benefits.

Observing the growth of our AMSRO student and resident membership levels the past few years, and their enthusiastic involvement in various AsMA committees and activities, has been very rewarding as we help young professionals join our cadre. Our international members are also truly vital to our growth and worldwide outreach, and their efforts to attend and participate at



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our Annual Scientific Meetings are a testament to global cooperation. We will continue to encourage further growth and opportunities for internationals within our ranks. I appreciate the work of the International Academy of Aviation and Space Medicine, and groups such as the European Society of Aerospace Medicine and other professional societies to share knowledge through the International Congress of Aerospace Medicine, the International Congress of Aviation and Space Medicine, and other venues.

Soon our President-Elect, Dr. Bob Orford, will take the gavel as AsMA President. Bob is exceptionally professional and competent, and AsMA is in truly good hands as he takes the helm. It has been an absolute pleasure to serve with Bob.

During the Chicago meeting, I sincerely hope the Annual Scientific Meeting will provide a positive experience, allowing attendees to gain more knowledge, make new acquaintances, renew friendships, and reinforce the unique aspects of our international organization of like-minded colleagues. In 6 years we will be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary of AsMA. I look forward to what we will experience with aviation developments, technical and human factors advancements, impacts of Artificial Intelligence, deeper understanding of our universe, and expansion of

human exploration both on planetary bodies and in the depths of the oceans.

This past January, my father Joe passed away at the age of 92. A Korean War era U.S. Air Force F-84/F-86 Crew Chief and mechanic, he shared with me his deep passion for aviation and technology as I grew up during the early years of the space program. As an IBM engineer, he was involved with placement of various electronic components into the instrumentation section of the Apollo rockets. He drove me all the way from Upstate New York to Florida in December of 1972 to witness the last, and only nighttime, Apollo launch, that of Apollo 17. I deeply wish he could have been at the Chicago Annual Scientific Meeting with my family to meet many of you and know he would be proud of all we collectively accomplish in making the world a better place and pushing the boundaries of exploration and science.

As I close my tenure as President, I feel truly blessed that AsMA has been "part of the fabric of my life" as a wonderful family of professional colleagues and friends from around the globe.

*Honor quidem fuit servire.*

All the best!

*Keep 'em Flying...and Full Steam Ahead.*