

# Reporter

## President's Message

By Andrew J. Richards, MD, FACS



### Please Vote!

I hope everyone is enjoying their summer vacations, relaxing and preparing for the year ahead. The U.S. Presidential election draws near, and I can't help but wonder how the outcome will influence

our future in the medical field. In this Olympic year, you can feel the increase in patriotism and national spirit. I hope this spirit carries over to the elections process and that people exercise

their right to vote. Apathy, laziness and other excuses not to vote are not acceptable. I believe that if you don't take the time to vote, you should not have the right to complain.

Sometimes this same sense of apathy can be found within the roles of those involved with organized medicine. There are some people who complain but still remain unwilling to participate in the process that will help implement change. Part of the process includes an active involvement in meetings and serving on committees that help to organize and develop ideas for change. A simple monetary

donation remains a viable option for those with too little time to attend another meeting. We are often outspent by the trial lawyers and other organizations that seemingly work against us. Their influence, which may be measured by their respective bank accounts, may determine much of what happens to organized medicine over the next several years.

So...please get involved and VOTE! No matter what your background is or your political and social views are, please exercise your right to vote. ■

## When Writing Letters to Legislators...

By Robert A. Ettlinger, MD

I'm sure that each and every one of you has done it, as you sat on your favorite comfy chair in your living room, contemplating life.

In a booming voice, you've announced to your family, "Boy, is that Congressman Dinglefeffer a major-league doofus! As a board-certified physician, I know much more than he does about how to run this country. Right after lunch, I'm gonna write him a letter about how I want him to vote on House Bill 12345, which deals with this week's "Health Care Crisis." In my

letter, I'm gonna point out his multitude of inadequacies, and tell him about my political beliefs, which are correct and astute in each and every way. Finally, I'll tell him that, if he doesn't take appropriate action on this Earth-shattering crisis, I won't vote for him come re-election time, and my single vote will cost him his political career. BWAHAHAHAHA!"

As you finish your tirade, you fantasize about the Congressman reading your letter with tears

continued on page 6

## 2008 Calendar of Events

### Executive Committee Meetings (Officers)

October 3, and November 5  
 6:30 PM at Society headquarters

### Board of Governors Meetings

December 3  
 6:15 PM at Society headquarters

### PA Medical Society Annual Business Meeting - House of Delegates

October 25-26, 2008  
 at the Hershey Lodge

### Doc Talk VI

November 8  
 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM at the Harrisburg Mall

1

Presidents Message  
 When Writing Letters  
 to Legislators...  
 Calendar of Events

2

Fall Education Seminar  
 Has Been Postponed  
 2009 Dues Reminder  
 DCMS "Excellence in  
 Clinical Nursing Award"  
 Presentation  
 From the DCMSA President  
 Volunteers and Supplies  
 Sought

4

Update from Penn State  
 AMA-MSS  
 New Members  
 Don't Forget to Vote!

5

County Medical Societies  
 Progress in PAMPAC  
 Membership

8

Don't Forget Deadline for  
 CME Requirements for  
 Re-Licensure  
 Doc Talk VI is Coming!

# From the DCMSA President

By Kathy Darowish

Here we are into the 83rd year of the Dauphin County Medical Society Alliance! We know that physicians' spouses are focused people, but who could have guessed that we would last this long and do so much for our area. This year promises to keep the tradition. My hopes are to continue the mission of DCMSA to promote good health opportunities and education to everyone in the community.

Our first meeting is exciting and I look forward to having many of our members and lots of guests (potential members?) share the fun, too. On September 9, the general meeting will have your very own John Benedict, MD as our guest. He will talk about his book, *Adrenaline*, a mystery about an anesthesiologist who goes too far with his ego and gasses. Many of the places in the book do seem familiar to Camp Hill or Harrisburg; however, I do not recommend reading this before you have any elective

surgery! Join us at Nino's restaurant 1801 Market Street, Camp Hill, at 11:30 am and meet the author.

I want to recognize Gretchen Ballard, who was the Hershey Rotary Club recipient of the "2008 Hershey Rotary Community Service Award" Gretchen is the Executive Director of the Community Check-Up Center at 38-C Hall Manor. Her main job is to obtain grants to keep this 501(c)3 facility open. It provides primary care to uninsured and under-insured women and children. The staff includes a pediatrician, ob/gyn nurse practitioner and bi-lingual medical assistants. Almost all of the money comes from donations and grants. Mrs. Ballard receives no financial rewards for any of her efforts. Gretchen personifies the mission of DCMSA, and we are so very proud to say she is a member of our organization. ■

# Volunteers and Supplies Sought for Mission Trip

By Domingo T. Alvear, MD • [www.worldsurgicalfoundation.org](http://www.worldsurgicalfoundation.org)

The World Surgical Foundation headed by Dr. Domingo T. Alvear and his wife Dr. Veneranda B. Alvear will be going to San Pedro Sula, Honduras, from September 6-13, 2008, for the sixth time to perform free surgical care to the underserved population in that country.

Dr. Roger Bucs, an Anesthesiologist, will be joining the group for the first time in Honduras. Dr. David Leber, a Plastic Surgeon, has been with the team for six years. All these physicians are members of the DCMS, Pennsylvania Medical Society, and AMA. Also coming are OR Nurse Lyndsey Kramm, NICU Nurse Sue Brackbill, and NICU CRNP Penny Barcavage, all from the Harrisburg Hospital. Cathy Satuffer, RN, an ER Nurse from York Hospital, will also join the team.

In addition, a team from Cincinnati Children's Hospital will be joining the WSF team. They include Dr. Marc Levitt, a Colo-Rectal Pediatric Surgeon, and his fellow Dr. Sean Barnett, Dr. Leslie Breech, a Pediatric Gynecologist, and several OR Nurses.

Dr. Seth Judd, a surgical resident from the Pinnacle Health Hospitals will be joined by two other surgical residents, Dr. Jeffrey Williams from Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, MI, and Dr. Gary Schwartz from NYU in NY.

We anticipate performing around 100 cases in one week. We will be involved in teaching as a component of our mission, and we will be sending a 20-foot crate of equipment and supplies to donate. We will accept monetary donations to cover shipping costs. We will also accept expired sutures, sterile gauze and disposable instruments and antibiotics that will expire in six months.

WSF is also planning a mission trip to Ethiopia from February 13-27, 2009. We are still accepting volunteers for this mission.

Thank you. ■

## DCMS "Excellence in Clinical Nursing Award" Presentation



DCMS continues its practice of supporting the nursing profession through our annual "Excellence in Clinical Nursing Award," which is presented to a HACC nursing graduate who, in the opinion of the faculty, demonstrates excellence in interpersonal communication, assessment, documentation, and technical skills. This year's ceremony was held Friday, May 9, 2008 at the Cooper Center. Dr. Richards had the distinct pleasure of presenting a congratulatory plaque and \$300 award on behalf of the Society to Vanessa Dietsche.

## Fall Education Seminar Has Been Postponed

The DCMS Education Task Force announced that the Fall Education Seminar, originally scheduled for Saturday, September 13, has been moved to Spring 2009. More information to follow.

## 2009 Dues Reminder

It's almost that time of year again! Dues statements will be mailed out soon. Please note that individual physicians whose dues are not paid on a group practice basis can conveniently renew their membership online. Members may also take advantage of quarterly dues payments via automatic credit card deductions. Help keep dues costs from rising—encourage your colleagues to join the Pennsylvania Medical Society and DCMS. For more information, contact the Member Services Department at (800) 228-7823.

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*—from Warren Buffett's Letter to Shareholders, February 28, 2006*

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*—from Warren Buffett, April 26, 2006*

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*—from Warren Buffett, May 30, 2006*



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# Update from Penn State AMA-MSS

By Brittany Massare

The students of the Penn State College of Medicine American Medical Association Chapter have been very busy this spring and summer.

In April, we had the opportunity to host a Clinical Skills Night with current Pennsylvania Medical Society President, Dr. Peter Lund. Dr. Lund led our students in a discussion on professionalism and ethics followed by a short demonstration on various suturing techniques.

In June, five of our students attended the American Medical Association Annual Meeting in Chicago. These students were involved in creating

new resolutions and policy with the Medical Student Section, as well as taking part in various workshop and community service activities throughout the week.

Currently, we are planning activities and events for the upcoming academic year and are very excited to welcome new student members from the incoming first year class. We look forward to another productive and fun-filled year. ■

## New and Reinstated Members

DAUPHIN COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS  
April 26 - August 5, 2008

### Full Active

Michael A. Bruno, MD, Radiology  
Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Hershey

Heath B. Mackley, MD, Radiation Oncology  
Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Hershey

Matthew F. Davies, MD, Obstetrics & Gynecology  
Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Hershey

Edward Vresilovic, Jr, MD, Orthopedic Surgery  
Penn State Hershey Bone and Joint Institute, Hershey

### Administrative

Andrea Dietz, Admin  
Urology of Central Pennsylvania, Lemoyne

Bonnie Savage, Admin  
Pinnacle Health Neurological Surgery, Mechanicsburg

Malee Maurer, CPMSM, CPCS, ME  
Holy Spirit Hospital, Camp Hill

### Residents and Students— Penn State College of Medicine, Hershey

Aaron Knudson, MD  
Rosemary O. Odocha, MD  
Michael C. Lynch  
Christopher Melinosky  
Emilie R. Muelly  
Kavita T. Vakharia

### Residents— Lebanon Valley Medical Center, Lebanon

Ariana R. Pichardo-Lowden, MD ■

## Don't Forget to VOTE!

For online information  
about registering  
and the voting  
process, click on  
[www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com)  
or call 1-800-552-VOTE.



- **October 6:** Last day to register before the General Election
- **October 28:** Last day to apply for a civilian absentee ballot
- **October 31:** Last day for County Boards of Elections to receive voted civilian absentee ballots
- **Campaign case report: What Obama and McCain pledge to do about the health system**  
[www.ama-assn.org/amednews/2008/09/01/gvsa0901.htm](http://www.ama-assn.org/amednews/2008/09/01/gvsa0901.htm)
- **2008 Presidential Candidates Respond to Ten Questions About Their Health Care Reform Proposals**  
[http://www.voicefortheuninsured.org/pdf/questions\\_for\\_candidates\\_rev.pdf](http://www.voicefortheuninsured.org/pdf/questions_for_candidates_rev.pdf)

# County Medical Societies Progress in PAMPAC Membership

PAMPAC recognizes the following County Medical Societies for having a significant percentage of the County Medical Society members as 2008 members of PAMPAC. As of July 7, six County Medical Societies have Silver Level and 15 have attained Bronze Level. We hope that each of you will reach Gold Level, 20% PAMPAC participation, in the next few months. We will recognize those County Medical Societies in the Bronze, Silver, and Gold levels in upcoming PAMPAC communications.

(as of July 7, 2008)

## Silver Level Pampac Participation

(County Medical Societies with 15% - 19.99% PAMPAC membership)

Clearfield County Medical Society	15.38%
Mercer County Medical Society	18.02%
Montour County Medical Society	17.14%
Somerset County Medical Society	17.24%
Union County Medical Society	15.38%
Warren County Medical Society	15.38%

## Bronze Level Pampac Participation

(County Medical Societies with 10% - 14.99% PAMPAC membership)

Adams County Medical Society	10.00%
Bucks County Medical Society	12.57%
Cambria County Medical Society	12.50%
Centre County Medical Society	12.33%
<b>Dauphin County Medical Society</b>	<b>11.24%</b>
Indiana County Medical Society	11.67%
Jefferson County Medical Society	10.00%
Lehigh County Medical Society	12.37%
Luzerne County Medical Society	10.05%
Lycoming County Medical Society	10.56%
Montgomery County Medical Society	11.86%
Northumberland County Medical Society	12.50%
Philadelphia County Medical Society	11.04%
Westmoreland County Medical Society	11.24%
York County Medical Society	12.24%

## Current PAMPAC Membership Levels

Here is a listing of each County Medical Society, followed by the current 2008 percent PAMPAC members in the County Medical Society, followed by the number of additional PAMPAC Members needed to obtain 20%, Gold Level Membership.

Adams County Medical Society	10.00%	8
Allegheny County Medical Society	6.05%	242
Armstrong County Medical Society	7.69%	3
Beaver County Medical Society	6.36%	24
Bedford County Medical Society	6.67%	2
Berks County Medical Society	7.03%	65
Blair County Medical Society	6.09%	16
Bradford County Medical Society	7.14%	11
Bucks County Medical Society	12.57%	41
Butler County Medical Society	5.13%	6
Cambria County Medical Society	12.50%	9
Carbon County Medical Society	6.00%	7
Centre County Medical Society	12.33%	6
Chester County Medical Society	10.45%	27
Clarion County Medical Society	8.70%	3
Clearfield County Medical Society	15.38%	2
Clinton County Medical Society	5.56%	3
Columbia County Medical Society	0.00%	8

Crawford County Medical Society	2.22%	8
Cumberland County Medical Society	6.76%	29
<b>Dauphin County Medical Society</b>	<b>11.24%</b>	<b>52</b>
Delaware County Medical Society	9.41%	52
Elk/Cameron Co Medical Society	0.00%	6
Erie County Medical Society	9.69%	36
Fayette County Medical Society	4.88%	12
Franklin County Medical Society	8.89%	15
Greene County Medical Society	0.00%	2
Huntingdon County Medical Society	0.00%	3
Indiana County Medical Society	11.67%	5
Jefferson County Medical Society	10.00%	4
Lackawanna Co Medical Society	8.14%	36
Lancaster City & Co Medical Society	6.93%	66
Lawrence County Medical Society	5.81%	12
Lebanon County Medical Society	3.60%	23
Lehigh County Medical Society	12.37%	30
Luzerne County Medical Society	10.05%	20
Lycoming County Medical Society	10.56%	15
McKean County Medical Society	5.41%	5

continued on page 7

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## When Writing to Legislators...

continued from page 1

in his eyes, and setting up an urgent conference with his staff to take action on your fannnntabulous political ideas.

Well, Charlie, I got news for you. After your family is done “lol” and “lmao,” as they say on the Internet, they’re going to give you a stat 5cc intramuscular injection of reality. The Congressman is away on a fact-finding mission to St. Bart’s, and one of his 19-year-old interns will be reading your letter for about 3 or 4 nanoseconds before she tosses it into the circular file.

Over the years, I’ve written several letters to politicians about my solutions to America’s complex issues. Oft times, black helicopters would be flying over my house about a week after I mailed the letters, yet it was rare that any of the politicians would stop by my home or office to kiss the back of my hand in reverence to my opinions. This got me to thinking that there must be some right and wrong ways to let your opinions be heard, and maybe make a difference in their political actions.

So here they are:

- 1) Don’t be vitriolic or sarcastic when critiquing their actions and ideas. Nobody likes to be attacked, whether or not they deserve it, and a negative tone in your letter will make the politician look at your ideas with disdain. State your ideas in a polite, and perhaps deferential framework, so that the reader can feel comfortable considering your beliefs. If you honestly believe that the politician will read your insulting, smug letter and say “That doctor is SO smart, and I’ve

never been so wrong in my life,” then maybe you should consider switching to decaf.

- 2) Show some respect for their position. I know your respect for politicians ranks somewhere down there with used-car salesmen, meth lab chemists, and proctologists, but it shouldn’t. Elected politicians have generally been successful in several aspects of their lives, and are intelligent enough to convince thousands or millions of people to vote them into office. They spend hours each day studying and discussing public policy, while your political knowledge is pretty much limited to watching Fox News while you’re eating your Frosted Mini-Wheats in the morning. Acknowledge that their position, no matter how boneheaded you think it is, has been carefully deliberated to at least some degree.
- 3) Don’t attack their underlying political beliefs. They’ve spent years of time and effort in deciding to act like a Democrat or a Republican. Since their government-managing philosophy is tied to what they do for a living, censuring it will go over as well as someone else criticizing your religious beliefs. Your letter will not be taken seriously.
- 4) Don’t expound on your political stance too strongly. Politicians don’t want to read about how you are more liberal than Sean Penn or more conservative than the Sheriff of Nottingham. This won’t impress them, and will not enhance the value of your letter. It will only provide late night fodder and laughs at their caucuses.
- 5) Get your facts straight. As smart as you think you are, Dr. Microvasculareconstructiveleftpinkysurgeon, politicians believe that they have some expert opinions about medical care, based both on their exhaustive study of the subject and their afternoon golfing in Scotland with the CEO of Kaiser-Permanente. If your letter contains misinformation, it won’t influence their decisions in a positive manner.
- 6) Keep your letter short and to the point. Politicians are busy people, like you, and have to read many letters each day from kooks and fruitcakes besides yourself. Your opinions will have more impact if they’re slightly shorter than last month’s publication of “The Congressional Record.”
- 7) Thank them for their attention to your ideas, and show appreciation for their efforts. Politicians like to feel the same adulation that Britney Spears craves, and it will help them to be respectfully contemplative of the points you’ve made in your letter.
- 8) Please remember, it makes no difference if you are right or not. Everyone thinks that they are right, and politicians hear many different points of view. Your passion or your belief in your own certitude makes no difference.
- 9) Finally, whether you like it or not, some of what you will get a politician to listen to is whether or not you have given them money in the past. A politician will read a letter and pay attention to a letter from one of his regular contributors long before he will read a letter from the general public. If you really want your opinions listened to, pick out a couple of local politicians you like and donate to them on a regular basis. Almost every lobbying group, with the exception of doctors, understands that this is a necessary part of getting their point across.

Doctor, I respectfully thank you for your attention to this article, and appreciate your efforts. ■



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## County Medical Societies Progress in PAMPAC Membership

continued from page 7

Mercer County Medical Society	18.02%	2
Mifflin/Juniata Co Medical Society	0.00%	9
Monroe County Medical Society	3.37%	15
Montgomery County Medical Society	11.86%	67
Montour County Medical Society	17.14%	1
Northampton Co Medical Society	6.99%	50
Northumberland Co Medical Society	12.50%	3
Perry County Medical Society	0.00%	1
Philadelphia County Medical Society	11.04%	84
Potter County Medical Society	7.69%	2
Schuylkill County Medical Society	5.21%	14
Somerset County Medical Society	17.24%	5
Susquehanna Co Medical Society	0.00%	1
Tioga County Medical Society	7.14%	2
Union County Medical Society	15.38%	4
Venango County Medical Society	9.09%	5
Warren County Medical Society	15.38%	1
Washington County Medical Society	4.90%	22
Wayne/Pike County Medical Society	0.00%	7
Westmoreland Co Medical Society	11.24%	23
Wyoming County Medical Society	0.00%	1
York County Medical Society	12.24%	30

Thank you if you have already joined PAMPAC for 2008. As PAMPAC advocates for your patients and your practice, your investment helps ensure your voice is heard in our state and national capitols. Your membership helps PAMPAC:

- Strongly urge the legislature to pass an Mcare abatement and phase out
- Negotiate for a meaningful plan to cover the uninsured
- Speak out against unfair contracting by health plans
- Protect the physician's scope of practice
- Develop a loan deferment system for physicians in training
- Advocate for a multitude of other measures impacting medicine

With critical AMA leadership, PAMPAC has successfully stopped the Medicare physician payment cuts for 18 months. This provides each physician with thousands of dollars in increased revenue.

The Attorney General is issuing indictments that are creating opportunities for change in the legislature. This election year, lawmakers are focused on healthcare. PAMPAC is budgeting soon for the general election. Now is the time to be sure you are a member.

There are three easy ways to make your investment:

- Send your personal check for \$150 / \$300 / \$500 / \$1000 to:  
PAMPAC  
PO Box 8820  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8820
- Call Dee Rosenberger 800-228-7823 X 7812
- Go to [www.pampac.org](http://www.pampac.org) (log in required)

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# Reporter

Fall 2008



#### How to Reach Us

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#### Submission of Newsletter Articles

The Reporter accepts unsolicited newsletter articles, however, there is no guarantee that they will be published. All submissions are subject to review. Articles should be of interest/pertain to physicians, their practice and health care in the Dauphin County/Capital Region. Local, state, and national perspectives are welcome. Submissions that are self-promotional or commercial in nature will not be accepted. Send your articles to the Society at [Dauphin@pamedsociety.org](mailto:Dauphin@pamedsociety.org) or fax to (717) 558-7841.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Society.

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#### Mission

The Dauphin County Medical Society, founded in 1866, seeks to serve its members, the medical community, and the citizens of Dauphin and surrounding Counties. The Society's mission includes: upholding the ethics and dignity of the medical profession, elevating and maintaining the highest standards of healthcare, promoting and disseminating medical information to members as well as the public, and promoting collegial relations among its members.

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## Don't Forget Deadline for CME Requirements for Re-Licensure

**All MD licenses expire on December 31, 2008.** The State Board of Medicine regulations state that to renew a medical license, a physician will need:

- 100 total credit hours of CME in the two-year license cycle
- A minimum of 20 of the total credit hours in Category 1
- 12 credit hours in the areas of patient safety or risk management (either Category 1 or Category 2)

**All DO licenses expire on October 31, 2008.** The regulations state that—to renew an osteopathic medical license—a physician will need:

- 100 total credit hours of CME in the two-year license cycle
- A minimum of 20 of the total credit hours in AOA Category 1-A
- 12 credit hours in the areas of patient safety or risk management (either Category 1 or Category 2)

If you have any questions about these requirements, you can call the State Society at (800) 228-7823 and ask for Leslie Howell, x-2624. Leslie is Associate Director for Continuing Medical Education at the State Society.

#### Online CME Available as Member Benefit

Through your membership in the state and county medical societies, you can access enough online CME to satisfy all of your patient safety/risk management requirements:

1. **Consult** offers ways to help you reduce your risk to liability lawsuits and promotes a healthy physician-patient relationship
2. **intouch** focuses on improving patient-physician communications and interactions

**Converge.** The Pennsylvania Medical Society's newest offering, uses a unique approach, telling the fictitious but realistic story of Valley Medical Group. Each issue, online at [www.pamedsociety.org/converge](http://www.pamedsociety.org/converge), focuses on a conflict and communications issue. Perspectives from the characters are followed by a consultant's suggestion to help make improvements in your practice and the way you handle conflict.

**Studies in Patient Safety.** In addition, members can earn CME credits through *Studies in Patient Safety: Online CME Cases*. These cases are based on actual patient safety events and incidents reported to Pennsylvania's Patient Safety Authority (PSA). ■

## Doc Talk VI is Coming!

Mark your calendar for Saturday, November 8, from 10 am - 2 pm and participate in this popular education event held at the Harrisburg Mall. Share your knowledge and expertise with members of the public who might not have ready access to medical care. Reserve your space now by calling the DCMS office at (717) 558-7849 or email [DauphinCMS@pamedsociety.org](mailto:DauphinCMS@pamedsociety.org).