

“The Last Charge!”

“Credit should go with the performance of duty, and not with what is very often the accident of glory.”

- Theodore Roosevelt, *“The Rough Riders”*.

Wow! It's hard to believe that it has already been a year since I started writing these editorials! I've always been a futurist, anxiously awaiting the next day, month, or year. However, right now, I wouldn't mind if things slowed down a bit. It seems as if time passes too quickly nowadays. Everything happens so quickly and time just flies by so fast that it is difficult to just sit and enjoy the moment.

I have enjoyed serving as your MCMS President this year. Thank you for the commentaries on my editorials which have been largely positive, save the two negative ones from those that I would have expected as much. Regardless, it was good to know that so many looked upon the editorials with the same concerns that I have and to those that didn't agree with me, well at least they're reading the magazine.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you as members to run for the Board and the Offices of the Board. It is a wonderful learning experience and a chance to make a difference. I know a lot of us shy away from the presidency because one of the responsibilities is to write these editorials, but believe me, once you start writing them, the verbiage just flows and we all have things that need to be said and shared. The best advice that I received when I was deliberating over my first prose was to just say what I felt. As you can tell, if you have been reading these, is that I have done just that. I have largely spoken from my heart and it's not surprising that the vast majority of you feel the same way. It is tough sometimes to open up and say what needs to be said. Become involved! You'll get more out of it than you would believe!

Needless to say, I'm a staunch physician advocate – why do you think I'm here? No matter our actual tiny differences, we all have a common goal which is excellent, compassionate patient care. That is what we are all about. But let me make it clear that what benefits us as a physician is always good for our patients. This is true, always has been, always will be (despite all the non-physician whining to the contrary). The facts are irrefutable.

I love my job; I love being a physician. It is without doubt the noblest profession bar none. That is why it pains me to see physicians willingly allowing entities (enter your favorite here) to devalue – and thus demean – our profession. A little backbone nowadays wouldn't hurt. It takes more character to say no than yes. We must hold firm in our convictions and not let these outside agencies influence and take advantage of us. Okay, sorry. I couldn't help myself in leading one more cheer before they wheel me off the stage.

I want to say thanks to all the Board members for their diligence, wonderful ideas, support and their nearly flawless attendance at our meetings despite all their busy schedules. Also thanks to Tony, Dan, and Carri for all the guidance and tolerating me for a year. A special thanks to Dr.

Jane Orient and Dr. Robert Gervais from AAPS for joining us at our annual dinner. I have always enjoyed their input and I hope to see them at future meetings.

I wish to extend a hearty welcome to our new president Dr. Suresh Anand. He is a very thoughtful, kind and considerate physician and I am confident that he will do a fine job in leading the Society in 2003. I am looking forward to reading these editorials instead of writing them, although I must admit I am going to miss my “bully pulpit”. But who knows, I may be back in some form! I think I now understand how Dr. Jarrett and Dr. Kirschner got started (I'm not sure if that's a promise or a threat).

As an addition in this issue of Round-up, you will find a letter Dr. Barry Kriegsfeld found while perusing some old papers of the late Dr. Eisenbeiss. It was written before I was born and it made me realize that the more things change . . .

Enjoyed it!
See you around town!

Mark E. Baldree, M.D.
President