

Peace and Happy New Year!

I am writing this in 2009, and my wish is that your Holiday was relaxing and joyous.

I am Susan Whitely, your 2010 Maricopa County Medical Society President. First, I would like to thank Dr. Brian Riveland, as Past President, and Dr. Edward Donahue, who preceded Dr. Riveland. They have both guided me and mentored me. I would also like to sincerely thank the Society staff, especially Dan Mitten, for transitioning me into this servant role.

Many of you may know or know of me, but for those who do not, I will tell you a little about myself. I was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, and raised in Dayton and Columbus, Ohio. I come from a large Irish-German family and I'm one of 60 grandchildren on my Irish side. I have been married to Ed for 18 years, and he is the reason I have been able to do what I do. We are blessed with an amazing 15-year-old son, Benjamin.

At the age of three, I was blessed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, which greatly influenced my career path. I attended Xavier University for undergraduate studies and I received a Master's Degree from Loyola (Chicago) in Pastoral Studies. After many years of practicing as a hospital chaplain, I decided to attend medical school at Ohio State University. I completed residency in Family Medicine at St. Joseph's and began my own practice in central Phoenix over 12 years ago.

My experiences as a patient for many years as a child, and later in life, as a chaplain, have shaped me as a family physician. I find being a physician business owner is sometimes a daunting task, because I am torn between helping my patients and simultaneously running my business. I am torn between spending the time my patients need, and seeing fewer patients, or always running late. I am concerned about litigation, but I do not want to over-treat the demanding patient of the "worried well." I am saddened by the economic plight of so many, but I need the little co-pays to help pay my expenses.

I desire to always practice evidence-based medicine; but guidelines frequently change, and "one size" does not fit all patients. I try to live up to my practice name "Healthy Outlook Family Medicine" and teach healthy choices to my patients, yet I don't always find it easy to maintain my own exercise and dietary efforts!

On a national level, I am distressed that people are dichotomized into adversarial groups — physicians, patients, insurance companies, lawyers, politicians, specialists and generalists. I believe that all involved groups must be heard to improve our health-care system. It can be all too easy to begin to see everyone, even the patients, as an annoyance, or perhaps as an impediment to my success. It can be all too easy to shut down and ignore the voices of those who have divergent opinions.

I would like to encourage your opinions this year, please freely share with us your thoughts in the *Round-up*. I am happy to share the editorial page as well. My email address is: swhitely@mcmsonline.com.

Finally, I am very biased. I fervently believe in the effectiveness of organized medicine, and the Maricopa County Medical Society specifically. I have also used several of the ancillary services, including an advertised realtor and the travel health insurance for a wandering niece. But more

importantly, the Maricopa County Medical Society wishes to give voice to all of us, even those who say “I don't get involved.” My New Year's resolution, for now and for the whole year, is very simple: By the end of my term in December 2010, I want to have one more member in the Society than in January 2010. Just one more voice to hear!

Please write me your New Year's resolutions at: swhitely@mcmsonline.com.

Thank you,

Susan M. Whitely, MD

President

The picture is a group of exercising seniors that I “teach” – they don't know that they teach and inspire me.

[photo in R: Drive]

