

# FP REPORT



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News for members of the American Academy of Family Physicians

July 1996

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### Special section inside on computers and family practice

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Lawmakers and the president seek compromise on insurance reform legislation. See page 4A.

#### Target: Home health care fraud, abuse

An AAFP commission advises FPs to protect themselves and patients from home health care fraud and abuse. See page 4A.



Napoleon in His Study  
—by Jacques-Louis David

#### Don't be a Napoleon!

James Jones, MD, encourages family physicians to stay true to their values in the midst of change. In a talk to residency directors, he suggests learning from Napoleon's mistakes at Waterloo. See page 4A.

#### Consider HEAL refinancing

If you are repaying a Health Education Assistance Loan, especially one from before 1992, you may wish to refinance it. See page 2A.

#### FP leads state immunization efforts

Audrey B. Rhodes, MD, directs the HOPE for Kids project that has helped South Carolina become number one in immunizing children under two years of age. See page 4A.

#### 13 candidates vie for AAFP positions

The AAFP Congress of Delegates will elect officers and directors Oct. 3 in New Orleans. See page 3A.

## Help Academy celebrate its 50th year in special week of community service

Do you donate your services or medical supplies to a local clinic for the poor? Have you ever wanted to help build or repair a home for an elderly person in need?

Recognizing that many family physicians are involved—or want to be involved—in charitable activities outside of their medical practices, the Academy has set aside a special week during the year-long celebration of its 50th anniversary in

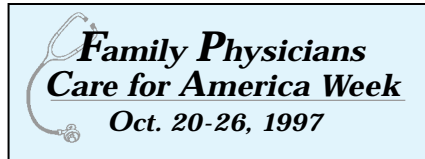
1997. Family Physicians Care for America Week—Oct. 20-26, 1997—will commemorate FPs' commitment to building better, healthier communities.

Key to the success of the project is your early involvement. The Academy asks that you make plans to work with your colleagues and community in donating services, planting trees, collecting food for the needy, or conducting another volunteer project.

To help you get started, the AAFP has developed a participant's kit including basic project start-up information, ideas for community projects, and materials to assist you in promoting your project. The kit has been mailed to constituent chapter presidents and executives; you may want to contact them about developing a project. Or you may want to initiate a project on your own or with other family physicians.

Regardless of the type or size of the project you'd like to undertake for Family Physicians Care for America Week, the AAFP wants to hear about your plans and form a partnership with you. A toll-free hotline—(800) 274-2237, ext. 4221—has been established in case you

have questions or want to share your ideas. Participants' kits are available free of charge through the AAFP Order Department.



To order, call (800) 944-0000 and ask for item #R046 or use the coupon on page 2.

The production of the kit is supported in part by an educational grant from Zeneca Pharmaceuticals.

In addition to Family Physicians Care for America Week, the Academy has several projects in the works to celebrate its anniversary. A commemorative book will chronicle the history of family practice from the days of Hippocrates and provide a brief history of the Academy. The 128-page book will feature vignettes of a diverse selection of today's family physicians, illustrating the miracles they perform every day.

Furthermore, participants at the AAFP Scientific Assembly Sept. 18-21, 1997, in Chicago will mark the 50th anniversary at a gala birthday celebration at the United Center, home of the Chicago Bulls and Blackhawks.

## AAFP publishes consumer health guide

The only complete medical guide for consumers produced with the input of family physicians will be available at retail stores in August.

The AAFP Family Health & Medical Guide was produced by Word Publishing in cooperation with the Academy.

The hardcover guide, which will sell for \$39.99, offers medical information for people of all ages and both genders. It features practical information on health issues, including diagnoses and treatments of more than 1,000 medical problems.

Other highlights in the 680-page book include self-care flowcharts; up-to-date facts on nutrition, stress, and fitness; emergency and first-aid guides; more than 450 illustra-

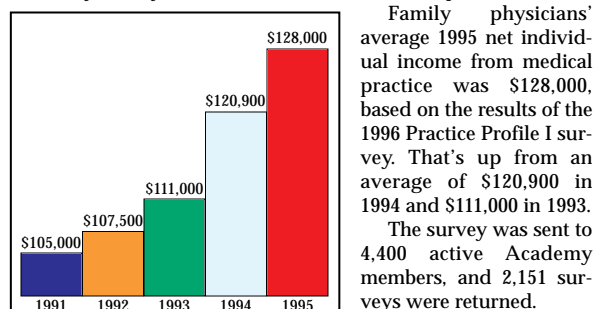
tions and photos; and 24 full-color pages written for children.

"As family physicians, we strive to keep our patients healthy by focusing on prevention," says Academy President Douglas E. Henley, MD, of Fayetteville, NC. "The AAFP Family Health & Medical Guide offers practical, easy-to-read health and medical information for all family members to help them become better informed about their health."

To obtain a sample copy of the book at a special rate of \$7 and free promotional material for your office, call Word Publishing at (800) 933-9673, ext. 2037, and mention priority code #03883. Additional copies of the book may also be available at a discounted rate.

## Income shift: FPs bring in more money

Family physicians' income is escalating, according to a recent Academy survey on characteristics of members' practices.



Family physicians' average 1995 net individual income from medical practice was \$128,000, based on the results of the 1996 Practice Profile I survey. That's up from an average of \$120,900 in 1994 and \$111,000 in 1993.

The survey was sent to 4,400 active Academy members, and 2,151 surveys were returned.

# News from AAFP Headquarters

## Target: home health care fraud, abuse

Family physicians need to be aware of potential fraud and abuse in home health care.

That's the message from the Academy's Commission on Health Care Services in response to two resolutions from the 1995 Congress of Delegates. The resolutions address the proper use and documentation of home health services and the liability risk for FPs who sign home health agency documents.

David H. Filipi, MD, of Omaha, NE, a commission member, gives this advice to family physicians: Be careful about the documents you sign related to home health care and the associated liability risks. Also, be sure that when you sign something, you are signing for a medical reason.

The Health Care Financing Administration requires physicians to sign orders of a home health agency as a prerequisite for Medicare payment to the agency.

This puts the FP in the role of "watchdog," says Dr. Filipi. Although family physicians are frequently patient

advocates, they can also be perceived as generating business for home health agencies. Furthermore, FPs may be unwittingly tarnished by fraud and abuse in home health care when they sign home health agency orders.

The commission urges AAFP members to try to protect themselves and their patients from fraud and abuse.

## HEAL refinancing has many benefits

If you are repaying a Health Education Assistance Loan, you might want to consider HEAL refinancing. You may be eligible for benefits such as: lower interest rates (especially for those who took out loans before 1992); slower accumulation of total interest; numerous repayment options, such as graduated and income-contingent repayment; no repayment penalties; and more time to make the total payment. If you have questions on refinancing, call (301) 320-9280.

## Join humanitarian effort; be a physician with heart

The Academy is gearing up for its fourth humanitarian airlift. Physicians With Heart, and you're encouraged to contribute supplies.

This year's joint venture with Heart to Heart International and the AAFP Foundation will deliver pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, and equipment Oct. 11-20 to two former Soviet republics, Kyrgyzstan and nearby Kazakhstan.

The aid will go to hospitals and other health institutions focusing on high-risk groups, women, infants, and the elderly. A US Agency for International Development project has been helping to establish family practice clinics in Kyrgyzstan.

You can participate in this humanitarian effort by donating much-needed items such as stethoscopes, blood pres-

sure cuffs, office instruments, pregnancy tests, crutches, wheelchairs, needles, catheters, IV supplies, braces, and recent versions of the *Physicians' Desk Reference*.

To make sure your donations are part of the 1996 shipment, send them by Sept. 15 to Heart to Heart International, 401 Mission Parkway, New Century, KS 66031. However, donations also will be accepted at the AAFP Scientific Assembly Oct. 3-6 in New Orleans. For more information, call Barb Nielson at Heart to Heart International, (913) 764-5200.

You can learn more about Physicians With Heart by visiting a special World Wide Web site created by the AAFP, at—  
<http://www.aafp.org/airlift>  
—or stop by the Physicians With Heart booth at the Assembly.

## Available on AAFP Express

Call the AAFP Express toll-free number—(800) AAFP EXP [223-7397]—and supply your AAFP ID number to have selected materials sent almost immediately to your fax machine. Some documents available in July:

Description of document	Document #
Weekly "Washington Update"	8009
Information on Fundamentals of Management course	8000
Information on National Conference of Women, Minority, and New Physicians	2010
Information on National Congress of Family Practice Residents/National Congress of Student Members	2011
How to delete hidden files from '95 Assembly CD-ROM	1004
Glossary of basic computer terms	1005
Bibliography of computer resources	1006
Tips on what you need to access the AAFP Web site	6000

### Notice to Macintosh users

#### If you have the '95 AAFP Assembly CD-ROM...

...and if you've installed Adobe Acrobat Reader from the CD-ROM on your Macintosh computer, several "hidden" files from the CD-ROM have been inadvertently installed on your Mac's hard drive.

The files were placed on the CD-ROM by the outside production team that developed the CD-ROM

for the Academy. The files take up about 3.5 mg. of hard drive space but will not damage the hard drive or computer in any way.

Instructions for deleting the hidden files from your hard drive are available from the AAFP Express automated fax service (see the directions above).

### Awards recognize CPT coding education, FP Report

- At a recent Current Procedural Terminology Advisory Committee meeting, the Academy received an award for its educational excellence in CPT coding. The meeting was held May 9-10 in Washington, DC. The CPT Advisory Committee advises the AMA CPT Editorial Panel.

- The Academy's *FP Report, Assembly Editions* published at the 1995 Annual Assembly have also been recognized. They won a Bronze Award in the 1996 Excel Awards of the Society of National Association Publications, in the convention daily newspapers category. The award was given at SNAP's conference May 24 in Washington, DC.



## NEW ORLEANS

### 48th Annual AAFP SCIENTIFIC ASSEMBLY

Oct. 3-6, 1996 (Additional CME Oct. 2)

**SAVE \$50  
if you register  
by July 15!**



Call (800) 926-6890 or e-mail [assemblyinfo@aafp.org](mailto:assemblyinfo@aafp.org) for a registration packet.

- ◆ The premier CME event for family physicians.
- ◆ High-quality CME in a wide variety of formats, from hands-on procedures courses to main-stage lectures.
- ◆ A variety of prices for CME, with many free offerings.
- ◆ Hundreds of exhibits on the latest products and services.
- ◆ Earn more than 50 Prescribed credit hours at one meeting.
- ◆ Bring the family so they can enjoy the Guest Tours and Courses and the Youth Program.

## Request Coupon

I would like to receive by mail:

- Family Physicians Care for America Week kit (page 1A).
- Information on *Good Health!* newsletter, a way to market your practice and educate your patients.
- Information on *Directors' Newsletter*, a biweekly update on AAFP policies and services and on events influencing family practice.

AAFP ID No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Office Telephone (include area code) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail completed coupon to: *FP Report*, 8880 Ward Parkway, Kansas City, MO 64114-2797, or fax it to (816) 333-3344. Thank you! 7/96

# Candidates

## Members vie for Academy offices, seats on Board of Directors

Thirteen Academy chapters have announced candidates for the following AAFP positions. All the candidates are AAFP Fellows and past presidents of their chapters, and they either are or have been delegates to the AAFP Congress of Delegates. The Congress will elect officers and three new directors Oct. 3 in New Orleans.

### President-elect

**Neil H. Brooks, MD**, Rockville, CT: in group family practice; ABFP Diplomate; serves as speaker of AAFP Congress and on AAFP Foundation board; chairs Committee on Resident and Student Affairs; served on commissions on Special Issues and Clinical Interests and Public Health and Scientific Affairs and on Committee on Mental Health.

**Kenneth L. Evans, MD**, Edmond, OK: rural health director, family practice residency; clinical associate professor; ABFP Diplomate; chairs AAFP Board, Executive Committee; serves on AAFP Foundation board; chaired Commission on Public Health and Scientific Affairs and Committee on Drugs and Devices; served on committees on

Public Relations and Marketing and Rural Health.

**Dale C. Moquist, MD**, Grand Forks, ND: in group family practice; nursing home medical director; clinical associate professor; ABFP Diplomate; serves on AAFP Board, Executive Committee; chairs Commission on Quality and Scope of Practice; chaired Commission on Membership and Member Services; served on Task Force on Obstetrics and commissions on Legislation and Governmental Affairs and Membership and Member Services.

**John E. Verhoff, MD**, Columbus, OH: in group family practice; clinical assistant professor; ABFP Diplomate; is AAFP vice president and AAFP Foundation board member; chaired AAFP Commission on Health Services; served on Commission on Continuing Medical Education.

### Vice president

**Susan Black, MD**, Lowell, MA: in solo practice; assistant clinical professor; serves on AAFP Board; chairs Commission on Continuing Medical Edu-

cation; served on committees on Aging and Health Education.

### Speaker

**Richard G. Roberts, MD, JD**, of Madison, WI: in rural family practice; professor; ABFP Diplomate; is vice speaker of Congress; chairs Commission on Clinical Policies, Research, and Scientific Affairs; served on Commission on Legislation and Governmental Affairs and committees on Professional Liability and Finance; chaired Task Force on Clinical Policies for Patient Care.

### Vice speaker

**David H. Filipi, MD**, Omaha, NE: medical director of regional multispecialty group practice; clinical associate professor; family practice residency coordinator; ABFP Diplomate; serves on Commission on Health Care Services.

**Michael O. Fleming, MD**, Shreveport, LA: in group family practice; ABFP Diplomate; serves on Committee on Finance and Insurance; chaired Committee on Public Relations and Market-

ing; served on Committee on Health Education and Task Force on Relationships With Proprietary Entities.

**Thomas J. Weida, MD**, Lititz, PA: in group family practice; ABFP Diplomate; serves on Committee on Public Relations and Marketing; chaired Parke-Davis Teacher Development Awards Committee; served on committees on Finance, Members' AAFP Insurance and Financial Services, New Physicians, Scientific Program, and Publications.

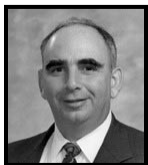
### Board of Directors

**Rose Mary Hatem Bonsack, MD**, Aberdeen, MD: delegate to Maryland's General Assembly; in limited practice of family medicine; serves on Commission on Legislation and Governmental Affairs; chaired Committee on Chapter Affairs.

**Melvin D. Gerald, MD**, Washington, DC: in group family practice with six offices; nursing home medical director; clinical associate professor; ABFP Diplomate; serves on Commission on Health Care Services; served on Task Force on Obstetrics.

**Marjorie Uhalde, PhD, MD**, Reno, NV: in group family practice; medical director of skilled care facility and home health care agency; clinical associate professor; ABFP Diplomate; served on Commission on Membership and Member Services.

**David M. West, MD**, Grand Junction, CO: in group family practice; clinical professor; residency preceptor; ABFP Diplomate; served on commissions on Health Care Services and Legislation and Governmental Affairs.



Dr. Brooks



Dr. Evans



Dr. Moquist



Dr. Verhoff



Dr. Black



Dr. Roberts



Dr. Filipi



Dr. Fleming



Dr. Weida



Dr. Bonsack



Dr. Gerald



Dr. Uhalde



Dr. West

## Come to New Orleans for 50+ hours of CME; browse AAFP Online for Assembly info

Blue bayous, hot jazz, and CME may be calling you to New Orleans.

If you attend the AAFP Scientific Assembly there Oct. 3-6 and tack on preconference sessions Oct. 2, you could accumulate more than 50 Prescribed CME hours.

Want a new way to read up on Assembly offerings? Enter the World Wide Web, open AAFP's home page at—  
<http://www.aafp.org>  
—and follow the directions to AAFP

Online. Then click on "comprehensive Assembly information" and scan the offerings in chronological order or by the topics you request. Some highlights:

- more than 500 individual CME sessions, including four evenings of CME;
- keynote address by Nancy Dickey, MD, chair of the AMA Board of Trustees and director of the Brazos Val-



ley Family Practice Residency, Bryan-College Station, TX;

• the youth program, featuring Mardi Gras World, a bayou tour, hands-on fun at the

Louisiana Children's Museum, encounters with sharks and colorful birds at the Aquarium of the Americas, and ghost stories and pirate legends retold by New Orleans historians;

• guest educational courses on finance, golf, self-esteem, and dealing with imperfect people;

• guest tours to enjoy jazz, local plantations, Cajun country, and Louisiana landmarks;

• the All-Member Event, featuring Doug Kershaw (the "Ragin' Cajun" fiddler), clarinetist Pete Fountain, and the Neville Brothers; and

• the Presidents' Reception, with music by the 5th Dimension.

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## News from Washington

### Congress, president attempt compromise on insurance reform

Congressional leaders and President Bill Clinton attempted to strike a deal in mid-June on controversial health insurance legislation. At press time, the question remained: Could congressional leaders and the president compromise and give the nation a measure of insurance reform?

In early March, the Academy endorsed a health insurance bill as it was originally introduced by Sens. Nancy Kassebaum, R-KS, and Edward Kennedy, D-MA. Its key provisions were portability of insurance for people who lose or change jobs, and restrictions on the denial of coverage because of pre-existing conditions.

The Senate tacked additions onto the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill before

passing it, and the House passed its own legislation. Last month, negotiators wrestled with the differences and drafted legislation that Congress and the president might approve.

The Kassebaum-Kennedy bill's central tenets remained intact. However, negotiators hammered away at points of contention such as:

**Medical savings accounts.** MSAs combine high-deductible catastrophic insurance policies with tax-free accounts from which people pay their own routine health care bills. The House had pressed for MSAs, but the Senate and the president objected, fearing that healthier, wealthier people would use MSAs as tax shelters and that premiums for traditional insur-

ance would skyrocket. The Academy favors MSAs as one of many options for expanding access to care.

The compromise proposed in mid-June would allow MSAs for the self-employed and businesses with up to 50 employees. After two years, a study would confirm whether MSAs lower costs and draw healthier people out of traditional insurance plans. After another year, large employers and the unemployed could use MSAs unless Congress intervened.

**Fraud and abuse provisions.** Congress had approved provisions to strengthen federal authority to penalize fraud and abuse in health care. The legislation could have subjected physicians to criminal penalties for activities

they didn't know were illegal and could have punished them for unintentional actions.

Medical groups contested the provisions. FPs used AAFP's legislative hotline to congressional offices in Washington to protest the fraud and abuse proposals. By mid-June, the deal-makers modified the proposals in response to physicians' concerns.

At press time, there were no guarantees either that Congress would pass the compromise legislation or that the president would sign it. However, it did seem likely that many provisions in the compromise will resurface next year—unencumbered by the distractions of election-year politics—if they fail to become law this summer.

### Stay true to your values in the midst of change, Dr. Jones urges FPs

*One ship drives east and another drives west  
With the selfsame winds that blow.*

*'Tis the set of the sails and not the gales  
Which tell us the way to go.*

— "The Winds of Fate"  
by Ella Wheeler Wilcox

KANSAS CITY, MO—As family physicians sail the uncharted waters of the evolving health care system, they must be guided by a moral compass. This was the message of AAFP Past President James G. Jones, MD, last month to family practice residency directors.

"Sometimes the sailing will be rough, with the winds of change blowing at gale force straight at our bow. At other times, the wind will be at our stern pushing us along faster than we wanted to sail," he said in the Nicholas J. Pisacano, MD, Memorial Lecture at the Workshop for Directors of Family Practice Residencies June 9-11. "Let the set of

your sails steer you in the direction of those values that made you unique."

Dr. Jones, executive director of the North Carolina Health Care Reform Commission, urged FPs to remain true to the principles defining family practice, including continuity of care, comprehensiveness, and accessibility.

He talked about the overwhelming changes occurring in the health care system, spurred by three factors: the cost of health care, the number of uninsured, and access-to-care problems.

"Any solution to these ... has family practice written all over it," said Dr. Jones, who founded the East Carolina University School of Medicine family medicine department. "It is becoming increasingly obvious to policy-makers and managed care CEOs that when it comes to the delivery of high-quality, cost-effective medicine, there is no substitute for the family physician."

Yet FPs must be wary not to make

the fatal mistakes that the arrogant, overconfident Napoleon made at Waterloo, said Dr. Jones. He asked his audience to consider the following points.

**Napoleon:** His first mistake was to delay his plan of attack until the environment changed.

**FPs:** "We can never be caught in family medicine waiting around for the environment to change. I'm sick to death of doctors saying, 'Well, we've always done it this way.' ... It's time for us to sharpen again those skills of adaptability that have made us unique."

**Napoleon:** He placed too much confidence in unreliable associates.

**FPs:** "I do not believe that we in family medicine, in the name of generalism, should expect the pediatricians and the internists to lead the charge. They are really not the answer to what is so badly needed in American medicine today. We must not shrink back

from that responsibility."

**Napoleon:** He had an inappropriate, outdated battle formation.

**FPs:** "I urge you not to be afraid of the new [technology], but to try it. It's unthinkable that we would have residency programs that are not totally computerized; that we wouldn't have computerized records ... telemedicine, or a whole list of accesses to the information highway. I believe that's what our responsibility is."

Dr. Jones stressed that his purpose was not to "spoil the victory parade" for family practice—but to remind FPs that what should have been an easy victory for Napoleon destroyed him and his vast empire.

"You are America's finest—and as program directors and educators, you have a moral imperative to sustain the highest aspirations of the students and residents you teach," he said.

By Toya Hill, Associate Editor

## Family Practice Spotlight



Dr. Rhodes

### FP plays lead role in state's immunization efforts

South Carolina is number one in the nation for immunizing children under two, and South Carolina Academy of Family Physicians President Audrey B. Rhodes, MD, of Columbia has a lot to do with that.

Since 1994, Dr. Rhodes has served as project director for the South Carolina HOPE for Kids project, sponsored by the nonprofit international charity organization HOPE Worldwide, Ltd. Working closely with other organizations, agencies, and coalitions, Dr. Rhodes helps plan the state's immunization activities.

She also coordinates the recruitment, training, and activities of the 100 people who volunteer throughout the

year, as well as the 600 South Carolinians who participated in HOPE for Kids' immunization project April 20.

Nationwide, more than 25,000 volunteers in about 40 cities gave parents of more than a million children information about immunizations and vaccine-preventable diseases April 20.

In South Carolina, participants canvassed Columbia's inner-city neighborhoods and knocked on doors to inform residents about vaccine-preventable diseases. That day, volunteers educated parents of more than 5,700 children about the importance of immunizations, and more than 70 children were immunized at local health departments.

"We train volunteers to be courte-

ous and respectful to the people they talk with ... to be sensitive when going door-to-door. When you enter somebody's home, you have to do that with respect. But we've always had a good response," says Dr. Rhodes.

In South Carolina, the project achieved a significant goal: through its efforts, more than 90 percent of the state's children under two years old have been fully immunized.

Dr. Rhodes, who is the SCAFP's first African-American president, was spotlighted in the April *Ebony* magazine. She also serves as medical section chief at the CM Tucker Jr. Center of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health.