



Bulletin

of the Mahoning County Medical Society
January ~ February 2008

EXPECT SOMETHING GREAT IN 2008!

2007 brought many changes to the Mahoning County Medical Society meetings. For starters, we moved the Annual Meeting to the Butler Institute of American Art. We changed from the old dinner meetings at the Holiday Inn to events that would attract our younger members and those with children. Starting with a Family Fun Night at the Mahoning Valley Scrappers in June, and concluding with Disney on Ice at the Chevrolet Centre in December, members and their families turned out to enjoy great times and opportunities to meet and network with other physicians.

In 2008 the MCMS will continue to host these events. This year we will offer tickets to the Ringling Brothers & Barnum and Bailey Circus on March 7th at the Chevy Centre. (Thanks to Dr. Greg Facemyer for this suggestion.) Our Family Fun Night at the Mahoning Valley Scrappers is set for Friday, June 27th against Batavia. We will also repeat the YSU Tailgate Party in September, as well as TSO and Disney on Ice.

Our International Dinner has also undergone a facelift and will feature international dishes created by five different chefs with international wines and beers to accompany the food. This "new & Improved" event will be held on April 11th at Fellows Riverside Gardens.

Other events we are considering are a visit to Wagon Trails Animal Park with lunch provided, and a picnic at Lake Milton in the Summer. We're also working on a breast cancer benefit for October that will be great fun, if all our plans work out!

Do you have any great ideas for an event, concert or show? We are always open to suggestions. Just call, fax or email your ideas to the office -- 330-533-4480 (phone), 330-533-4940 (fax), mcms1872@sbcglobal.net (email).

As always, invitations or flyers will be sent for all events and members are entitled to one free ticket for each event. We will let you know on the flyers which events are limited to three additional tickets. Please remember that payment must accompany all ticket requests, and that tickets are sent on a first-come, first-served basis. Participation will again be limited to members only. In 2007 we bought 50 tickets for TSO and 50 tickets for Disney on Ice and will do so again this year unless we anticipate even greater interest.

So, welcome to the New Year --- EXPECT SOMETHING GREAT IN 2008!

Bulletin

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The Bulletin reserves the right to edit all contributions for clarity and length, as well as to reject any material submitted, including advertisements.

Subscription rate of \$20.00 per year is included in MCMS dues. Correspondence and changes of address should be mailed to the above address.

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CALENDAR

January 22, 2008

*Annual Meeting
Butler Institute of American Art*

January 30, 2008

*Sixth District Winter Caucus
Tippecanoe Country Club*

March 7, 2008

*Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus
Chevrolet Centre*

April 11, 2008

*International Wine & Beer Taste
Fellows Riverside Gardens*

May 3-4, 2008

*OSMA Annual Meeting
Hilton at Easton, Columbus*

June 27, 2008

*Family Fun Night with the
Mahoning Valley Scrappers*

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www.mahoningmed.org

Classifieds

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Prime Boardman medical office space available for rent. 1000 sq. feet on 2nd floor with both elevator and stair access. Walking distance to the Holiday Inn.

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WORK HAS BEGUN ON THE 2008 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY. IF YOU WISH TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DIRECTORY AND YOU HAVEN'T YET PAID 2008 MEMBERSHIP DUES, PLEASE DO SO IMMEDIATELY. ONLY THOSE MEMBERS WHOSE 2008 DUES HAVE BEEN PAID WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE DIRECTORY.



From the President by Charles A. Crans, MD

Family Holidays

What a glorious and joyous holiday season has just passed! I hope your holidays were as enjoyable and enriching as mine. To me, the origin of happiness is in the unity of the family. Getting together with one's spouse, children, and relatives is the basis of my holiday enjoyment.

But what has happened to the cornerstone of humanity – “the family”? No longer does it seem to be a doctrine of being. Our culture seems to have eroded to one of desire for instant gratification at any cost, and moral attrition.

Not long ago, I attended a church wedding in which the presiding minister acknowledged that 50% of the marriages he performs today will result in divorce within five years.

Marriage, family, children, monetary success, and happiness are all part of life's challenges. But they don't establish spontaneously, and need to be labored at for successful attainment. We need to learn to postpone gratification initially, and climb that mountain to success. Set your goals high, and work to achieve them.

Bringing back the family unit will rebuild our society into the basic fundamental cornerstone of life. Family begets family. As we enjoy our family in our homes, we will expand to find family in our everyday lives – with our families, our fellow physicians, our neighbors, and our friends and relatives. As we grow, we begin to respect the wants and needs of our “family” as well.

As the family is reestablished again, joy and pleasure will instill back into our lives. Holidays will, once again, be joyous occasions. Be assured the trials and tribulations of everyday life will persist, but with the unity of family, all obstacles will be conquered.

As the holidays draw to a close and we enter into a new year, let us all unite and maintain our families of everyday life. May you all have a joyous, prosperous, and healthy family life in 2008, and thanks to all of you for being a member of our Mahoning County Medical Society Family in 2007.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles A. Crans, MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, circular flourish at the end.



NOT COVERED

In most portrayals of the problems facing the system of health care in the United States, it appears that a lack of insurance coverage has become equated with an inability to receive health care. Everyone is coming out for “universal health coverage” of some form or another, all ultimately in some form of insurance, whether government provided (Social Democrats) or government subsidized / mandated (Chicken Republicans). From the constant reminder of the 47 million people uninsured, through documentaries by Michael Moore, and peppered with stories of tragic outcomes of patients succumbing to terrible illness simply because they were uninsured, the media believes the only problem we have is finding a way to provide everyone with insurance. These are radical oversimplifications of the issues facing us, and distracts us from the real problems which are more fundamental, which is a refusal, or an inability, to provide necessary services, neither of which will be addressed despite any expansion of the current structure, by either the government or any other third party payor.

The plight of the ubiquitous 47 million uninsured is not adequate impetus for change, as they represent a constantly shifting constituency, most of whom will receive benefits in a short time, to be replaced by the next college graduate or temporarily unemployed worker. With all due respect to Mr. Moore and his talents, his efforts appear to be fodder for both sides of the debate, and his position being seen as biased undermines his credibility. Narratives of untreated illness are quite common among the insured as well, and poorer outcomes for uninsured people are a result of more complex factors than simply not having insurance or government coverage for health care.

Health care has been provided and financed in a myriad of ways throughout human history, and this history has always included some mechanism for provision of care to those unable to pay. Until recently, this was primarily achieved through cost shifting wherein providers and institutions overcharged those able to pay in order to offset the costs of care for the poor and uninsured. Institutions and physicians also traditionally cared for a percentage of non-paying patients as charity or mission, both seen as a significant part of their commitment and profession, easily served with most payers at 1.65 X Medicare, much harder to swallow at 1.02 (or less).

The truth and essence of the matter rests in physicians and institutions not being remunerated adequately on the average for any given services. This has happened in plain sight, despite 200 million people *having* insurance, and providers knowingly and willingly for the most part contracting with the government and other third parties. Under the current system, access to care is still threatened, as evidenced by the increasingly vocal threat by physicians to make care unavailable if and when Medicare cuts occur.

Continued on Page 5

NOT COVERED continued

The belief that responsibility for paying for health care rests with someone other than the patient has increased, from the expansion of both government and employer based plans, and now epidemically contributes to the current expectation of *insurance* for all. The goal should rather be an expectation of *health care* for all, as insurance in and of itself has not, does not, and will not resolve the issues of unwillingness to provide or inability to afford health care, which are genuine issues at current rates of reimbursement. If the goal is, as it should be, universal access to care, there should be another means besides expansion of insurance coverage. As there will always be those in need, who cannot afford, our system would be better served if solutions addressed the questions of why physicians and institutions are either unwilling or unable to care for patients without regard to remuneration. More of the same will only lead to more of what we have, and it's not working, for anyone.



Bits 'n' Pieces

The following physician has retired:
Daniel Handel, MD

Daniel Ebert, MD has a new address and phone number effective February 1, 2008:
1485 E. Western Reserve Rd.
Poland, OH 44514
Phone: 330-757-1495
Fax: 330-757-1899

Bel Park Anesthesia has moved to
4135 Boardman-Canfield Rd.
Canfield, OH 44406
Phone: 330-286-5330
Fax: 330-286-5396

The Circus is coming!
March 7, 2008, 7 P.M.
Chevrolet Centre

Watch your mail for ticket information!

NEW MEMBERS

Adrian Ieraci, DO

Family Practice

Associates in Family Medicine
80 Marwood Circle
Youngstown, OH 44512

Medical Education: Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine,
Kirksville, MO

Internship: Meridia Southpointe, Warrensville Hts., OH
Residency: Forum Health Northside Medical Center

Regis P. Burlas, DO

Anesthesiology

Bel Park Anesthesia
4135 Boardman-Canfield Rd.
Canfield, OH 44406

Medical Education: Midwestern University, Downers Grove, IL
Internship: Doctors Hospital of Stark County
Residency: New Jersey School of Medicine & Dentistry
Fellowship: Children's Hospital of Akron

ATTENTION MCMS MEMBERS

If you are moving your office, changing your phone or fax number, or changing the name of your practice, please notify the medical society ASAP so the changes can be included in the new membership directory.

Because many of our members may have to relocate their offices due to the sale of Beeghly Medical Park, we are prepared to hold the printing of the 2008 directory to include all of the changes. As soon as you know your new address and phone number, please call, fax or email the new information to MCMS at:

Phone: 330-533-4880

Fax: 330-533-4940

Email: mcms1872@sbcglobal.net

CHANGES TO PHOTO SCHEDULE

Since you received the mailing regarding the photo shoots scheduled by RCL Portrait Design, they have changed the dates! The updated (and I hope, final) schedule is as follows:

January 15th - Northside Medical Center
January 16th - Trumbull Memorial Hospital
January 17th - Trumbull Memorial Hospital
January 18th - St. Elizabeth Health Center
January 21-24 - St. Joseph Health Center

If you have not already scheduled your sitting, please call RCL at 800-951-8712. If you already have a recent photo in the directory that you would like to use, you may do that also. Just give the office a call and let us know.

2008 Membership Dues are past due!
If you have not paid your dues, please do so as soon as possible in order to continue to enjoy member benefits.

In response to concerns expressed by some of our members, we are providing the following information from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration website. For more information on this issue, go to www.fda.gov.

FDA Finds Consumers Continue to Buy Potentially Risky Drugs Over the Internet

Practice Puts Consumers at Risk and May Be More Expensive than Domestic Purchasing

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration continues to warn the American public about the dangers of buying medications over the Internet.

New data collected by the FDA show that consumers who are trying to save money on prescription drugs don't need to take chances by buying prescription drugs from foreign Internet sites, because low-cost generic versions are available in the United States. This finding also may be an indication that some consumers are likely buying foreign drugs this way to avoid getting a prescription from their doctor or health care professional, since many Web sites do not require a prescription.

Safety Concerns

The use of prescription drugs without a prescription is an intrinsically unsafe practice. FDA urges consumers to have a prescription from their doctor or other health care professional before using prescription drugs. The agency also urges consumers to review www.fda.gov for important information before making such purchases.

Consumers should be aware of safety concerns of drugs purchased from unregulated Internet sellers since some of these drugs might:

- require careful dosing and monitoring;
- not have adequate labeling for safe use;
- be inappropriately packaged, therefore product integrity is uncertain;
- have been withdrawn from the U.S. market for safety or efficacy reasons;
- may carry risks that require initial screening and/or periodic patient monitoring;
- cause harm—such as a controlled substance (narcotic), whose use should be supervised by a doctor or health care professional due to abuse potential; and
- have clinically significant drug-drug interactions.

Recent examinations of a sample of drugs shipped to U.S. consumers found several drugs are associated with higher risks and are more dangerous to the consumer if used without the supervision of a doctor or health care professional. For example, warfarin (an anticoagulant or blood thinner) is a medication that requires very close monitoring to prevent stroke or death. Another example is amoxicillin and other antibiotics that should not be used for self treatment to reduce the risk of antibiotic-resistant infections.

Levothyroxine, a thyroid replacement hormone, also requires close monitoring to ensure effective treatment. Another blood thinner, clopidogrel, may pose increased risk of cardiac events, such as heart attack if used in sub-optimal doses, which might be found in imported tablets. (See more examples in Table 2).

Consumers are also at risk if the drugs are not properly labeled for safe and effective use. For example, alendronate sodium, which is used to treat and prevent osteoporosis, should include information warning patients of significant side effects if it is not taken appropriately. Imported eye drop preparations may not have been manufactured under proper conditions to ensure sterility, leaving patients susceptible to contamination that may result in serious infections. These are only a few examples demonstrating the importance of obtaining FDA-approved drugs and health care provider monitoring.

Cost Concerns

The examination of foreign mail shipments also found that about 45 percent of the imported products already are available in the United States as an FDA-approved generic drug (see Table 1). About half of these generic drugs are available through national pharmacy chain programs that offer generic prescriptions at a cost of \$4 each. This cost is usually significantly less than the cost of drugs charged by Internet sellers. FDA has documented problems with imported drug products and has taken action when possible against foreign Web sites selling counterfeit products.

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REMINDER TO MEMBERS

If you have moved or changed your phone number, please notify the MCMS office of the change. This applies to all members whether Active, Resident or Retired members. This will save the society money by not having to pay for returned mail. If you are planning to retire or close your practice, you may contact the office to obtain a checklist of things you are required to do, including disposition of patient records. Every day we get calls from patients who are looking for medical records for which we have no information on their whereabouts. Help us to help you by notifying the society of your plans.

In Memoriam

Bertram Katz, MD

October 5, 1924 ~ December 31, 2007

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