

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT – SPRING 2000

Fellow Space Medicine Branch members, it is time for the annual triple event. That is the President's newsletter; the ballot for the next Executive elections; and the necessary request for payment of Branch dues. Following will be my summary of activities while the remaining elements will be found as separate items in this mailing.

The Space Medicine Branch is in a stable configuration. Membership remains relatively constant, as does the financial ledger. This is comforting news as the end of another year draws near.

As the year ends, thoughts of the annual Branch meeting and the luncheon spring to mind. However, in addition to these well-recognized events, I would like to remind you that the Branch has an overall presence throughout the AsMA scientific session presentations. Admittedly, some members are also members of other AsMA Constituent organizations; this does not detract from the fact that your involvement in various presentations or endeavors is also done as Branch members. The prevalence of Branch activity is underscored by the large number of scientific sessions the Branch is endorsing this year. The endorsement is based on the subject and/or Branch member contribution to the presentation. These events were enumerated in a recent Branch news page in the Association's Journal.

Looking forward to the Houston meeting, I have taken to heart the AsMA president's philosophy for his year of 'new horizons'. This revolves around the fact that NASA is no longer the only Agency responsible for setting medical standards for humans exposed to orbital or sub-orbital flights. This represents a new dimension in 'space medicine' and members of the Branch are actively involved in this development. It is also reasonable to expect more of you will participate in this area as this sector of space activity grows. To highlight this new horizon, our luncheon speaker, in Houston, will address the issue and I anticipate some interesting speculation on what the future will bring in this realm.

The Young Investigators Award committee, led by Lloyd Tripp, is busily contacting the eligible presenters scheduled for this year's scientific sessions. The Committee will review the papers in preparation for hearing the presentations as a comprehensive selection process for the eventual finalist. The team is very dedicated and the process has become very exacting as the Branch has matured. The members of this committee deserve a tremendous amount of credit, appreciation and thanks for all their hard work.

An Ad Hoc committee of the Executive has reviewed the Branch Constitution and By-laws. Changes will be discussed at the Branch business meeting and recommendations for any necessary improvements will be handed off to the next Executive Group.

Art Arnold, MD, as a member-at-large, was asked to create a database detailing the flight surgeons involved with all of the US manned space launches. He has been working enthusiastically on this project. When it is completed the Branch will make it available.

The 13th "Humans in Space" conference follows the AsMA meeting and is being hosted this year in Santorini, Greece. Much of the motivation behind this meeting site and its organization belongs to our Branch member from Greece, Chrysoula Kourtidou-Papadeli, MD. Dr. Papadeli is also the Chair of the Branch's International Activities Committee.

It has been an honor to be the Branch President for the past year. The honor is especially notable as the Houston meeting represents the Fiftieth anniversary of the Space Medicine Branch being granted Constituent organization status in the Aerospace Medical Association. The evolution of manned space endeavors and the contributions, over this time, by Branch members, to the safety of humans in the space environment give the Branch a rich history. Thus the Branch has matured and perhaps has come of age in this period of the 'new horizons' and I feel privileged to have been a part of the process. I thank you, the membership, for your loyalty and support. I owe the Officers, members-at-large and the Committees a large debt of gratitude for their dedicated efforts. Two individuals that must be recognized are Col. Jim Collier and Dr. Phil Scarpa. Dr. Collier has done an excellent job as secretary/treasurer and I expect to see continued significant contributions from him in the future. Dr. Scarpa has expended a tremendous effort in keeping the Branch focused and visible. He has been responsible for the Branch web page and has worked hard to ensure the Branch has had a constant presence in the Journal over the past several years. Phil will be a good President and I ask that you give him your full support. Again, thank you for your support over the past year; let's have an outstanding meeting in Houston.

Robin Dodge, M.D.  
1999-2000 President