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Forum



IAFCCP

Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds

A behavior of mine is always looking for patterns and correlations. Sometimes I like to amuse myself and look for these correlations in the most unpronounced locations; for instance, the movie *Bohemian Rhapsody*, a biopic about the late lead singer of the band Queen, Freddy Mercury. I enjoyed the film, but I don't imagine you were looking for my expertise as a movie critic.

I love EMS. I love the business, patients, medicine, innovation, and, most importantly, I love the crews. Nowhere else have I seen a group of people so selfless that sacrifice is not considered sacrifice. A group of people, driven by passion, in an uncontrolled environment, critically thinking nonstop, to not just kind of save but really save some of our sickest and most injured members of the community. I love the people who are willing and driven to do this job, who truly espouse the values of readiness, expertise, and professionalism.

Good thoughts, good words, good deeds, an interesting line in *Bohemian Rhapsody* that caught my attention. From Zarathustra, meaning that we can make this world heaven or hell depending on how we think, speak, and act. Having served on the board for the past 3 years, I have no doubt this association is aligned with positive change. I am excited to work with the IAFCCP and its leadership board to represent the voice of specialty care paramedics throughout the globe. Our new board is excited and hungry to drive value to our members, drive influence to our industry, and drive excellence to our patients.

To our members that voted for me, thank you for your confidence. I will truly do my best to not disappoint. And so it goes.

Ryan Walter, President

AAMS

Challenging Times

Air medical services, like all emergency services and our health care system at large, are increasingly faced with some enormous

challenges. The new year and new political environment in the United States will only deepen those problems, as solutions to long-standing issues in health care financing slip through the cracks of a highly partisan political environment.

AAMS continues to advocate for solutions to the economic challenges faced by air medical services in the form of Medicare reform that includes cost transparency, quality assurance, and provisions for the sustainability of air medical services throughout the United States. While we lost some big supporters in the previous election cycle, the good news is that we retained some of our key Congressional allies, and we are positioned to gain new, energetic support from some of the fresh faces in Washington, DC. With their support and leadership, and by working across party lines—both within our industry and in Congress—we can affect change in broad and meaningful ways.

At the same time, AAMS and its members are continuing to look at ways to work in concert with other EMS partners—emergency physicians, ground ambulance providers, hospital and health care groups—to advocate for solutions that will take patients out of the middle of a complex billing process and ensure a robust, quality air medical transport system that provides access for patients in need. We are not alone in facing these challenges, but we may be left out if we cannot find ways to cooperate and compromise.

Please get involved. Educate yourself on the issues facing our community and become part of the solution with us. The AAMS Board and staff stand ready to help you in any way we can. AAMS can be reached at (703) 836-8732 or online at www.aams.org.

Looking forward to a successful 2019!

Doug Garretson, AAMS Board Chair

AMPA

Self-Awareness

Who are you? What do you do? What is unique about what you do? What do you need to know to do what you do? As I set out on

my brief journey as president of AMPA, I find myself pondering, on many different levels, the same existential questions that I ask my providers during orientation. Self-awareness is key to growth. We all need to understand our roles as practitioners of air and critical care transport medicine, we need to consider what is unique and special about our practice compared to that of similar practitioners, and we need to recognize and seek out the knowledge and tools we require to practice in our particular niche.

We need to consider these questions, not only on an individual level but on a collective level as well: *Who are we? What do we do? What is unique about what we do? What do we need to know to do what we do?* As I write this, I have just recently returned home from AMTC18 in Phoenix and the AMPA Fall conferences, where I had the pleasure of congratulating this year's AMPA Distinguished Physician, Andrew Berry, and this year's Medical Director of the Year, David Thomson. Both the Medical Director Core Curriculum and the Air Medical Physician Symposium were great successes, and I thank everyone who participated this year.

A lot of interesting discussion took place, and it is always impressive to see how much we have to learn from each other. More than a quarter of our membership attended AMPS, and we took several audience polls throughout the day, some of which speak to who we are and what we do. Not too surprisingly, the majority of those present were North American emergency physicians and medical directors, with a strong showing of flight physicians in the mix. I'll let you consider, along with me, what is unique about what we do and what we need to know to do it. I know part of the answer lies in some of the things we do each fall as an association.

As an association, we also need to consider these questions on an organizational level: *What is AMPA? What does AMPA do? What is unique about AMPA? What does AMPA need to know to do what it does?* During my

final board meeting as president-elect, I asked our board of trustees to consider these questions along with me as we look forward to continuing to grow our association, and I eagerly anticipate our development in the years to come.

Brendan Berry, President

ASTNA

Never Underestimate the Impact of Your Interaction

Being in the transport profession provides many opportunities to make a difference, even in the face of tragedy. A program I flew with for many years had a ridealong program available to fire, EMS, law enforcement, paramedic students, dispatch, and hospital personnel. During a routine day shift, a young woman named Barb arrived at our base about a half hour early for her ride along, clearly nervous, although excited for her experience. We did our morning briefing, safety paperwork, and checked the aircraft.

While completing our tasks, I asked Barb about her role in health care and interest in air medical transport. She explained that she became an EMT merely so she could take a ride in our helicopter in honor of her late son, Danny. A colleague of mine who was

previously aware of her aspiration to complete a ridealong scheduled her on a day we had a PR event to ensure she got to take her flight for Danny. Danny was diagnosed with leukemia at age 3, spending most of his time at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, watching our helicopter land and take off, as his room's window had a clear view of the helipad. Danny's dream was to be a doctor on a helicopter when he grew up. Barb shared that, for his 5th birthday, he had a helicopter cake and proudly wore a doctor's outfit for the occasion. We were not able to make our PR that day, as we received a mission for a female patient with a brain aneurysm needing a rapid transport to a Chicago hospital. This proud mother got her flight for Danny!

A week later I received an email with a picture of downtown Chicago. In the skyline of that picture was a bright beautiful cross. Barb knew I was a woman of faith and wanted to share this picture with me. It was in that email that she also shared with me that this flight meant more to her than any of her expectations, as Danny passed shortly after his fifth birthday from a brain aneurysm after a bone marrow transplant.

I encourage each of you to look back at your different encounters, the extra time,

and investment you have made to do your best for your patients, the families, and your colleagues. The times you encouraged the newbie, took the time to teach and also learn. Know that your interactions make lasting impressions. . . make them good ones! I want to thank you for being a part of our amazing transport association.

I am hoping to see you and collaborate at the Critical Care Transport Medicine Conference (CCTMC) in Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 15-19. We will be having our Annual 5K walk/run or sleep in for the cause in remembrance of our fallen colleagues. The funds will go to the families of our fallen colleagues. This is a great conference with outstanding clinical education offerings. Encourage your peers to get involved in the Air & Surface Transport Nurses Association if they have not already!

Remember to never underestimate your ability to make a difference—continue to lead, guide, and inspire!

“Guard well within yourself that treasures kindness. Know how to give without hesitation, how to lose without regret, how to acquire without meanness.” George Sand

Sharon J. Purdom, President