

President's Report 2008

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It is a pleasure to inform you of achievements in 2008. Once again we have demonstrated that our strength is in bringing to our membership medical education programs of the highest quality. Each year we have taken an interdisciplinary approach to update theory and practice in our specialty of medicine and nursing across a broad array of topics in occupational and environmental health. The 2008 Annual Conference chaired by Dr Scott Mirani and dinner meetings organized by Dr Sandy Stratford, continued the trend in the recent few years of realizing marked increase member and visitor participation. The AC Planning Committee, which included our nurse colleagues with the MaAOHN, deserves much appreciation. The high quality of our AC and its secondary benefit of bringing us together for social and business exchange are reflected in growing participation and sponsor support. We continue also to emphasize the importance of the environment and of global occupational and public health in a time of burgeoning manmade and natural disasters, this year with the keynote address by NIEHS director, Dr Howard Frumkin, on climate change.

This year we mourned the sudden loss of Dr Bill Patterson, and in his memory have established a special AC lecture on excellence in the practice of OEM, something Bill was passionate about. Bill was remembered for his leadership, his participation with as a member of the ACOEM Board of Directors, and his tireless support of NECOEM. Many of us learned a great deal from Bill about the practical aspects of running a good and successful clinical practice.

This year our educational efforts have also gone global and free via the internet in the form of podcasts, accessible to anyone in the world with a computer. Several lectures from the 2007 AC and subsequent lectures and interviews have been posted on the NECOEM website and Scott Mirani, our podcast program manager, has informed us that these programs have been downloaded by people on every continent. NECOEM has become the first and only provider of free OEM podcasts in the world. This is a very exciting development and one about which I personally am very proud of for NECOEM. In addition, we are offering again this year ABPM Maintenance of Certification credit for participants in the AC educational program.

We are now into our second year of close association with the Occupational and Environmental Medicine Association of Connecticut (OEMAC) to whom administrative consultation is provided by our Executive Director, Dianne Plantamura. Our mutual goal is to help promote the educational missions of both organizations. To this end, in September in Sturbridge MA, we convened for the first time a half-day joint educational program with OEMAC on cardiovascular disease in firefighters. This successful program was led by Dr Jon Mittelman. A member of the Board of Directors from each organization has an invitational seat at all of our respective Directors meetings. Both OEMAC and NECOEM have recently begun to explore the possibility of merging our two components into one.

Dr Neil Hass of VT has been our membership leader and membership has grown due to his efforts. Dr Craig Curtis of Maine continued as editor of the *NECOEM Reporter* and he will be passing on this challenging responsibility to Dr Abe Timmons. This newsletter now goes out to over 250 organizations and businesses interested in OEM. Dr Mark Glencross continued to make our website, www.necoem.org, perhaps the best of ACOEM component websites. We remain very grateful to them and to those upon whom they have relied for help.

I am thankful for your participation in NECOEM during my tenure, and I look forward the leadership of our new President, Dr Reid Boswell.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas H. Gassert
December 5, 2008