



Member Newsletter – February 2010

This newsletter is published for American Holistic Medical Association members and friends. To submit articles or ads, please contact Terri DiPaola, Director of Education & Outreach, at 216.292.6644, or by email at terri@holisticmedicine.org.

Message from our President

I've been pondering a lot about community. It's a word we use often. We live in communities, work in communities, have "communities of faith" and "community developments". What does it really mean? Is it just a bunch of folks in the same place or who happen to share a common interest? Is there anything more? Is our world of healthcare a community? Is the holistic/integrative world a community? Is the AHMA?



One of the refrains that has echoed through the last 30 years of the AHMA has been member and conference participants' comments that their attraction to the AHMA in some way had to do with a sense of community. What element is that? How do we harness it and cultivate it consciously?

I recently attended an exceptional gathering in the beautiful hills of Topanga Canyon, CA on the edge of the Pacific entitled "ReVisioning Medicine". Twenty-eight of us came together for a four-day retreat to share our experiences, learn from one another, and actively serve the healing needs of the members. We also gathered to contemplate and examine the critical questions of where our healthcare system stands, where it is headed, what it needs in order to heal, and how we can take steps toward that healing goal. We called for help from the spiritual realm, we told stories, shared poetry and dreams, drummed, played instruments, created safe space for conflict, and found our interconnections. We mourned the suffering in our ailing system and resolved to actively move toward effective change together. It was a similar experience to many such gatherings I have

been privileged to be a part of in my life, and quite a different experience from the "neighborhood" or "community" in which I live.

My sense is that the critical elements of community involve several key features. First, there is conscious intention. Real community isn't a random grouping wrought by external forces flinging people together. It involves a purposeful aim, a *raison d'être*. Secondly, community seems to require vulnerability, a lowering of our masks, our daily guards, a willingness to learn something new about ourselves and the others with whom we are communing. For a healing community, it also seems to me that threaded through these aspects must be the essential quality of compassion. We must be able to extend ourselves empathically, to be willing to "walk a mile in another's moccasins". Community is of the heart more than the head.

Further, the unification of these three elements seems to call forth the universal flow, the divine energy, to move amongst us and through us for its ultimate healing purposes. I am reminded of the verse, "Where two or more are gathered together in my Name, there I will be also". Indeed, throughout the philosophies of all the world's great spiritual traditions, the promise is repeatedly made that if we will but open ourselves just a crack, the greater Divine flow is ready and willing to move us toward service of everyone's spiritual betterment.

How can we as the AHMA keep striving to embody real community? I do not wish for us to deceive ourselves into believing that because we are a "group", that means a community. And yet, it is clear that at many times in our gatherings and

Continued on next page

togetherness, real community has evolved. We can certainly create venues and activities that enhance that possibility, certain formats that allow us to cultivate community very directly, but I suspect that the real emergence of community is a more dynamic, present-moment event. It happens when we as participants bring those afore-mentioned elements to the table when we interact with one another regardless of our setting, when we are vulnerably compassionate with very conscious intention together.

I would like to create discussion around this. Tell us your experiences with community, what were the elements for you? How do you cultivate community in your life? One of the participants in the Topanga gathering was Dr. Glenn Lopez, and I invite you to read his article in this newsletter detailing his experience in the creation of community in the poorer urban sections of Los Angeles. How can each of us better create community where we are? In our families? In our workplace? How can the AHMA best serve this purpose of creating community? As we ponder these questions there is a loving universe waiting for the crack in the door....

Looking forward to seeing you all in Nashville in March-



J. David Forbes, MD

Executive Director's Report

The AHMA has an open-book management style, which means that we share information openly with our staff, members, and other stakeholders. We believe there is significant value in openly sharing financial and other information so that we are empowered together to make good decisions.



With 2009's books coming to a close and plans well underway for 2010, this seems like a perfect time to share some of our specific accomplishments with you. Here's a look at the year in review:

- Raised \$19,500 from 9 sponsors and \$24,815 from 30 exhibitors

- Received \$32,606 in cash donations and \$10,200 in in-kind donations (computer & graphic design services)
- Partnered with nurses to host a CME pre-conference symposium; launched the joint conference initiative with ICIM for 2010, and finalized plans for a collaborative conference among four national organizations in 2011.
- Launched a "chapter" system in three pilot locations (Cleveland; Minnesota; and Orange County, CA)

A comparison to 2008 performance clearly demonstrates our positive growth, and in a difficult economy no less!

- New member revenue increased by an impressive 22%.
- Membership renewals increased by 7%.
- **All membership categories** except Practitioners **increased**. That includes doctors, students, interns and residents, retirees and friends. The Practitioners category held steady with 2008.

Although it sounds like we did really well on the revenue side (and we did!), we still finished the year with less than \$2,000 profit to carry over into 2010. That's because we invested in and hosted, an expensive, but successful HOLISTIC HEALTH NOW conference. It was great to bring our community of members and friends together for education and spiritual nourishment.

If you have any questions or would like more specifics about 2009 outcomes or 2010 plans, please contact me at your convenience. I'm only a phone call away at 216-292-6644 or my email is donna@holisticmedicine.org.



Donna Nowak, Executive Director, CEO

Whether through membership, sponsorship or donations, the AHMA thanks you for your generous support in 2009!



An Example of Community in *ACTION!*

A novel program developed by Dr. Glenn Lopez of the UCLA Department of Family Medicine, is tackling two serious healthcare issues and creating community at the same time.

The *Sun Valley Diabetes Prevention and Early Intervention Program* addresses the need to; 1) diagnose and treat chronic diseases like hypertension and diabetes at the earliest stage possible; and, 2) reduce the number of uncompensated ER and hospital visits due to the high prevalence of untreated diabetes and hypertension, particularly among the uninsured.

The program is a low-cost, holistic approach to chronic disease management, and can prevent or slow the development of the majority of costly complications associated with these conditions with significant cost savings to area hospitals, both public and private.

Part One of the program is the promotion of community-wide walking groups. From December 2006 to September 2008, the program established 14 walking groups in seven sites in Sun Valley. Each group walked approximately 60 minutes daily M-F. Over 3,000 people formally participated with an average daily walking census of over 300 participants at its peak.

Part Two of the program targets screening of individuals for diabetes and hypertension in communities where walking groups have been established, and **Part Three** involves low-cost management of diabetes and hypertension through mobile group appointment clinics. Among the many "side benefits" of the program, participants experienced:

- 1) Health benefits - Less obesity with decreases in cholesterol, diabetes, hypertension, depression, and improvements in arthritis.
- 2) Community security - The communities where walking groups are active are more socially integrated, with more people

- 3) walking in the communities, more eyes in the neighborhood.
- 4) Informed community - Through ongoing discussions, community members are becoming more informed regarding existing social, health, housing and legal services available to them.
- 5) Social benefits - Social integration (community!) is occurring through the continuous and recurring nature of the walking groups and the periodic mobile clinic visits, allowing people to get to know and support each other.

If you would like more information on this program, you can view an informational video at www.myfoxla.com, or contact Dr. Lopez at glennlopez@mednet.ucla.edu.

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AHMA/ICIM Joint Conference

Healthy Brain, Healthy Body:

Mental Wellness for the 21st Century

March 19-21, 2010
Nashville, TN

Join us in Nashville!

AHMA Members Got Spammed

On January 14, some of us got to see the lengths to which someone will go in order to send spam, i.e., one of those folks who is the “consultant to a highly-placed millionaire who wants to give you a commission” for helping get his money out of the country? That is NOT the kind of referral that AHMA endorses on your behalf!

To give you peace of mind that we respect your privacy:

- 1) Our website Doctor & Practitioner Finders do not include email addresses.
- 2) We do not sell or rent member email addresses.
- 3) When we send an email broadcast to members, our banner graphics are included as a method of recognition.

As an added precaution in hopes of preventing future spam, the PDF version of our Member Directory (which includes member email addresses so that you can refer and connect) now requires member log-in through the website.

Thank you for your understanding.

Still Seeking Testimonials

from Terri DiPaola

In a previous newsletter, I asked for patient testimonials that could be used in marketing materials including our website, newsletters, brochures, etc. To date, only a few testimonials have been received. I KNOW that there are many success stories among our members' patients, and how powerful sharing those stories can be. It can be the difference between someone reclaiming and restoring their health by “braving the waters” of integrative medicine, or, out of fear and ignorance, continuing with the status quo of symptom treatment that currently prevails.

So again, I request that you solicit a testimonial from any of your patients who have benefitted from holistic medicine. Especially powerful are testimonials from patients who:

- have eliminated medications.
- found relief through an integrative or CAM approach after exhausting all conventional approaches.
- have been cured of an illness thought to be terminal or incurable.
- made lifestyle changes resulting in substantive health improvements.

A “Testimonial Authorization Form” is available so your patients can document their story and give permission for us to use it. Please contact me at 216.292.6644 or terri@holisticmedicine.org for more information or a copy of the form. Thanks SO much for your support!

Post your books and articles!

Did you know that you can post your books and articles in the “Publications” section of the AHMA website? A visitor can find your book on the publications list, link to your site or Amazon, and purchase the book online.

AHMA receives a small percentage of any books purchased through Amazon from our site.

To obtain a submission form, call 216.292.6644 or email Shakirra@holisticmedicine.org.

Thank you to our Sponsors and Friends

Our transformative work is made possible by member dues, private donations, and the generous support of these wonderful companies.



If you're not yet a member, we encourage you to consider the free membership available online at https://www.integrativepractitioner.com/membership.aspx?path=join_banner_150x250.



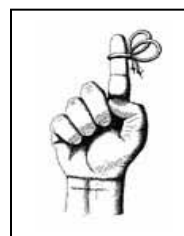
The Effective Health Care Program, sponsored by the Federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), conducts comparisons of healthcare treatments to provide reliable evidence about what works best. The EHC Program conducts research on a wide range of health care topics, including diagnostic tests, disease management strategies, and behavioral health interventions.

The research produced by the EHC Program is translated into practical decision-making guides for consumers, clinicians, policymakers, researchers and others. One of the unique aspects of the EHC Program is engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders throughout the research process to ensure relevancy and transparency – from the nomination of research topics to the translation and dissemination of results.

The EHC Program has compared treatments for conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, osteoarthritis, depression, and others, and they're ready for more!

AHMA believes our organization and members can benefit from participating in the EHC Program, as there are several topics nominated for research that involve holistic and complementary medicine, and there are always opportunities to suggest more. For examples of topics that have been recently nominated, or to view completed research products, please visit their website at www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov. Also, nominating topics for future research is easy. Click on the "Submit a Suggestion for Research" tab on the site.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to "make your voice heard" and help further research into holistic and integrative medicine.



Don't forget to use your AHMA discount at

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Free Integrative Practitioner Membership

If you are a licensed, certified or allied healthcare practitioner, you are eligible to join the *Integrative Practitioner* at no charge. Here are just a few of the numerous benefits of membership:

- 1) Opportunities for peer-to-peer discussion.
- 2) Access to articles, evidence-based research, clinical outcomes, best practices, protocols and policies.
- 3) Practitioner level access to Natural Standard's professional databases.
- 4) Free subscription to Integrative Practitioner Update, linking you to happenings in the Community including new features, top discussion topics and poll results,
- 5) Much more!

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The Web site can be accessed directly at:
www.healingchronicdisease.org
or through the Continuum Center for Health and Healing at: www.healthandhealingny.org.

Generous Donors Respond to Year-End Fundraising Campaign



Membership dues and charitable donations make it possible for non-profits like ours to do good deeds. We extend *special thanks* to these generous donors who collectively contributed **\$2154** as part of our year-end fundraising campaign.

Please consider adding your name to this list of special friends.

Peter Albright
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Christiane Northrup
Augusto Pareja
Mary Lou Stricklin

Patrick Belisle
Christina Brown
Nelson Diers
Alan Gaby
Ellen Labelle
Donna Nowak
Hank Roth

CCHH Launches NIH-Funded Site

The Continuum Center for Health and Healing (CCHH) at Beth Israel Medical Center, the largest comprehensive integrative medicine facility in the United States, recently launched a multimedia consumer education Web site on integrative approaches to three chronic diseases: heart disease; diabetes and chronic pain. Funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the site is written by experts in the field and entirely evidence-based, is in English and Spanish, and is presented in text, audio slides and Flash animation, making its information accessible to a wide variety of users.

Through patient focus groups, the site developers learned a great deal about the struggles, needs and life issues of patients living with chronic disease. "People expressed feelings of isolation and a sense of being on their own in terms of the ongoing management and multiple biopsychosocial issues that arise," says Marsha Handel, MLS, Director of Informatics and Online Education at CCHH, who developed the grant proposal and oversaw all aspects of the Web site's production. "We hope people will visit the site and recommend it to colleagues as well as friends, family and patients seeking multidisciplinary approaches and self-care strategies that reinforce a positive, empowered approach to managing chronic disease."

ACCAHC Clinician & Educator's Desk Reference

John Weeks of *The Integrator Blog* recommended this guide in reference to the "When to Refer" topic in last month's newsletter. Developed by the Academic Consortium for Complementary and Alternative Health Care, this guide to the five licensed complementary and alternative health-care professions, written and edited by experts including several AHMA members, is a desk reference for clinicians, and



a textbook and resource for educators and students. Also included is information on emerging fields of traditional world medicines, holistic nursing and holistic and integrative medicine.

Copies are available for purchase at the ACCAHC website at www.accahc.org.

AHMA Chapter Events

California - Orange County

Meetings in Orange County are held the 4th Saturday of the month. Find out more by calling Chapter President Michel-Joy DelRe at 949-305-6380, or email her at OrangeChapter@holisticmedicine.org.

Minnesota

For information on quarterly meetings, or details concerning the AHMA's activities in Minnesota, please contact Chapter President, Bill Manahan MD at MinnesotaChapter@holisticmedicine.org.

Ohio - Cleveland

For details concerning AHMA local activities in north-eastern Ohio, please contact Chapter President Tamara Macdonald, ND, at ClevelandChapter@holisticmedicine.org.

To submit an article for the chapter newsletter, please email NewsltrCleve@holisticmedicine.org.

Plans are being finalized for a kick-off program entitled "Holistic Heart" on February 25 or March 4, TBD.



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FEB National Events

February 19-22, "Healing the Brain", Hyatt Regency , Bellview, Seattle, WA

February 25-27, "Integrative Healthcare Symposium", Hilton New York, NYC

February 26-28, Society for Orthomolecular Medicine 16th Annual Scientific Meeting, Holiday Inn, San Francisco, CA

...and remember to mark your calendars for
**AHMA & ICIM's
"Healthy Brain, Healthy Body" Conference
March 18-21 Nashville, TN**

**Happy
Valentine's Day!**