

Jan./Feb. 1996

85 WEST ALGONQUIN ROAD • SUITE 550 • ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL 60005

## Survey findings reveal value of Annual Meeting

Nearly three-fourths (72 percent) of the allergists who attended the ACAAI Annual Meeting, Nov. 9-15, believe the College is their most valuable source for obtaining continuing medical education (CME) credits, according to the findings of a 1995 ACAAI Needs Assessment Survey.

A total of 431 responded to the survey, which was conducted during the Annual Meeting in Dallas. Members also were asked to weigh in on some of the CME sources currently sponsored by the College. The three sources listed—Annual Meeting, Board Review Course and the Literature Review Course—all received high marks. However, the Annual Meeting was rated the most popular CME source; 81 percent of the respondents said the Annual Meeting “totally” or “mostly” meets their educational needs.

Some 87 percent of the respondents believe the College should help prepare its members for recertification.

The clinical-content areas rated most important for future learning were “standardization of indications and methods to be used in immunotherapy” and “basic, practical, diagnostic therapeutic modalities used in allergy, asthma and immunology.”

Meanwhile, the three socioeconomic areas rated most important were “cost effectiveness of allergists as health care specialists,” “dealing with managed care issues,” and “definition, maintenance and expansion of the allergy, asthma, immunology field of medicine.” ♦



AP/Wide World Photos

Former first lady Barbara Bush was a special surprise guest at an Annual Meeting dinner party honoring ACAAI Immediate Past President Dr. Diane E. Schuller. Mrs. Bush was among the 700 guests who saluted Dr. Schuller for her many contributions to the College and the specialty.

## College sponsors national asthma-awareness campaign

ACAAI will launch a National Asthma Awareness Campaign in conjunction with Asthma Awareness Month in May.

The campaign, co-sponsored by ASTRA USA and several other pharmaceutical companies, will focus on the following objectives:

- Raise awareness among patients of unnecessary lifestyle compromises they make to accommodate their asthma, many of which could be eliminated with proper treatment

- Increase comfort level with inhaled steroid therapy as a primary therapy for asthma treatment

- Position ACAAI members as asthma specialists and the College as a driving force in patient education

The asthma-awareness initiative is designed to challenge asthma patients, primary care physicians, nurses and pharmacists to think about the lifestyle limitations they may not now recognize as coping mechanisms that patients adopt to keep asthma under control.

*Campaign continued on page 8*

# Doing for ourselves

by Dr. Ira Finegold

**M**any of you are familiar with the work of ACAAI's Managed Care Liaison Council (MCLC). This is a program begun last February to inform managed care medical directors, quality-assurance directors and all those willing to listen about the benefits of allergy care—in particular asthma—by the allergist/immunologist specialist.

Since our program began, there have been 28 visits to managed care companies that insure 3.7 million individuals. This has been no small achievement and its success belongs to the original 12 allergist trainees and the staff at PCI that has organized the campaign and secured the appointments.

To inform the managed care companies, we published "The Role of the Allergist in Cost-Effective Treatment of Asthma" and sent it to all members. Incidentally, there are no copyright laws attached to the book, so you may duplicate it at will and add your own updates. The managed care executives with whom we spoke are very interested



Ira Finegold

inner workings of managed care companies' committees so that we may have input into the medical care of our patients. This does not detract from the excellent progress on parameters and outcome studies accomplished by the ACAAI/AAAI Joint Committee on Practice Parameters.

## What is our plan?

We urge state and regional allergy societies to develop a list of individuals willing to serve on volunteer committees of managed care corporations. As we visit these companies, we will provide them with this information. As soon as a society can prepare this information, please send it to the ACAAI office (85 W. Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60005; Fax: (847) 427-1294).

Also, state and regional societies may request a mini-training program by the MCLC at a meeting or as a free-standing event. In order to successfully maintain a seat at the decision-making table, it is important to contact as many managed care organizations as possible. For this, we will need everyone's concerted help. We hope this is the first

pebble in the pond that will produce many significant ripples.

## What else can be done?

I encourage you to review your journals for managed care articles, abstracts

and work being done that validate the role of the allergist/immunologist. As you become aware of this information, fax or send a copy to the ACAAI office (mark it "attention MCLC"). In this way, we can update our "blue book" continually.

The first update I am submitting is the recent article by Abramson, Puy and Weiner (none of them allergists),

Message continued on page 7

# Board OKs new managed care contract service

ACAAI launched a new membership service designed to ease allergists' frustration over managed care contracts.

For a \$150 fee, members now can have their managed care contracts reviewed by Andre Hampton, J.D., Ph.D., professor of contract law at St. Mary's University in San Antonio.

There is only a two-week turnaround time for this service, which applies only to managed care contracts from major health plans but not to highly technical IPA contracts. Dr. Hampton will provide members with a detailed list of points that should be negotiated before they sign the contract.

"Allergists are inundated with large, telephone book-sized managed care contracts," said Dr. Bob Lanier, chairman of the new ACAAI Socioeconomic Council, which developed this unique member service. "Many members say, out of desperation, they often sign these contracts after only brief conversations with their partners or other allergists."

In September, several ACAAI Board members submitted previously reviewed managed care contracts to Dr. Hampton.

"They found that Dr. Hampton's analysis was accurate and brought up points they had not considered before signing the contract," Dr. Lanier said.

The Socioeconomic Council developed a checklist (see enclosed brochure) that describes provisions that would be included in members' managed care contracts.

Allergists in groups may find the contract review particularly economical.

"I think this is a heck of a deal for the fee that is being charged," ACAAI Board member Dr. Charles Siegel said. ♦

*"In order to successfully maintain a seat at the decision-making table, it is important to contact as many managed care organizations as possible."*

in hard data—which we supply—as well as guidelines for referral, which are in the book. This is where we are at the present time.

## Where are we going?

The next step is to deliver the information to as many managed care companies as possible. During a meeting of the ACAAI Managed Care Committee and MCLC at the Annual Meeting in Dallas, it became clear that one of our immediate tasks is to become active in the



# Dr. Schuller calls for renewed commitment to patients

**A**CAAI Immediate Past President Dr. Diane E. Schuller reminded physicians of the three most important virtues of medicine—caring, commitment and courage—in her Nov. 11 presidential address in Dallas.

Dr. Schuller invited physicians to join her as she recited the Hippocratic oath with the ACAAI Board of Regents. Following are excerpts from her presentation:

## 'The Business of Medicine: Hippocratic or Hypocritical?'

"... I so remember the excitement I had on the day I was to graduate from medical school and the reverence I felt for a very special oath that I was about to take. It was the oath of Hippocrates [which] was intended to guide us on an exciting embarkation in this 'sea of life.'

"... The message it offered was loud and clear: For this honored journey, we as physicians must be "C" worthy. Caring, commitment and courage must be our virtues. ...

"... As I reflect upon my experience, especially ... of the past three or four years, I now realize how unprepared I was for the dramatic change that has occurred in medicine. Our healing has evolved into a business. Where in the past we were "C" worthy because of our caring, commitment and courage, to be "C" worthy in the current business-driven environment replaces these virtues with cost-effectiveness, conservation of health resources, and connections. ...

"... Those people whom we treat are no longer regarded as our patients. They have been converted into consumers of health care, with gatekeepers to limit all health expenditures.

"... We as physicians are being forced from professionals who are caring, committed and courageous, into functionaries who are concerned with cost-effectiveness, conservation of resources, and connections. How should we react? How should we respond? ...

"... We physicians can make use of [the Hippocratic oath] to navigate a course in the increasingly troubled waters of modern medicine. It will help us then to become "C" worthy. This is precisely what Hippocrates had in mind for his students, and his oath was clearly designed to provide them with a guide for their professional career. ...

"... Is medicine a business? There certainly are aspects of business in what we do, for even a not-for-profit organization must generate a surplus of revenue over its expenses. But while generation of profit might be sufficient for some enterprises, it will always be secondary for us. ...

"... Let us remain Hippocratic and not hypocritical, and we will have something that no other group has—the knowledge that we are helping others in ways that no one else can.

"No group is better suited than physicians to help patients, and we must learn how to do this in an economy which is not supportive. ...

"... Yes, Hippocrates gave us quite a challenge, [but] I know we're up to it. Remember, the rewards we receive cannot always be measured in terms of financial compensation.

"For I have found it in a simple, but priceless treasure given to me by a delightful 8-year-old girl. It's a beautifully framed, handmade message that simply reads: 'Thank you for keeping me healthy.' ❖



Diane E. Schuller

# Presidential kudos

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton sent an open letter to members attending the Annual Meeting in Dallas. The letter, excerpted below, congratulated Dr. Diane E. Schuller on her past presidency.

"... It gives me great pleasure to add my voice to yours as you honor Dr. Diane E. Schuller as the first woman to serve as president of the College in the 52 years the College has been serving its membership. As you come together and honor Dr. Schuller, you recognize the positive influence a single individual can have on his or her community. ..."

Sincerely yours,  
Hillary Rodham Clinton

**Beginning January 20, the ACAAI central office telephone and fax area codes will become 847. The new numbers will be (847) 427-1200 and Fax: (847) 427-1294.**

# Barkin assumes presidency of ACAAI Auxiliary

Sandra Barkin assumed the presidential reins of the ACAAI Auxiliary during the College's Annual Meeting in Dallas. Barkin succeeds Nona Nan Chapman.



Sandra Barkin

The Auxiliary also elected a new slate of officers following its Annual Business Meeting luncheon in Dallas. The slate includes Maureen O'Connell, President-Elect; Caroline Sparks, Vice President; Debbie Wille, Secretary; Bonnie Miles, Treasurer; and Board of Governors Marcia Ransom, Mary Sue Mitchell and Dr. Sandra Newsom. ❖

# Annual Meeting Scrapbook



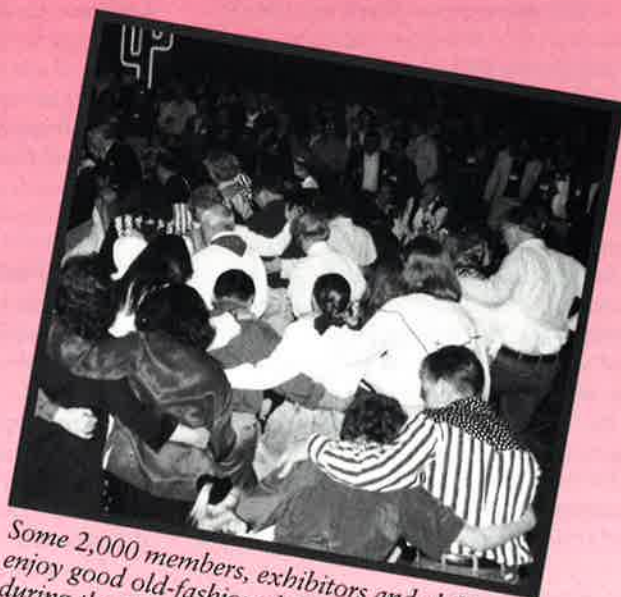
The 1995 ACAAI Distinguished Fellows are, from left, Drs. Charles Naspitz (International Distinguished Fellow), Stuart Rusnak, Bob Lanier and Robert Miles. Drs. Robert T. Scanlon and Hyman Chai were honored posthumously.



The Nov. 13 Dessert Extraveganza, sponsored by Muro Pharmaceutical Inc., proved too tempting for these two as they sample the wide variety of fruit selections.



JoAnn Metzler (right), of Shering/Key, presents a plaque to Dr. Betty Wray, ACAAI President-Elect and the 1995 Bela Schick Lecturer.



Some 2,000 members, exhibitors and children enjoy good old-fashioned Texas line dancing during the Presidential Reception, sponsored by ASTRA USA.



# Nov. 9-15, Dallas



*Barbara H. Layman, of Waynesboro, PA, received the first ACAAI Robert T. Scanlon Community Service Award.*



*Emmy-award winner Ben Vereen belts out a tune during the annual ACAAI Fundraising Dinner Dance. The event raises funds for the College's Research and Education Fund.*



*Katha Black, host of the TV show "Hot, Hip and Country," calls out line-dancing instructions during the Presidential Reception.*



*An allergist reviews one of the videotapes at the Learning Resource Center, sponsored by Glaxo Wellcome.*

# College proposes new registry to track pregnant asthmatic patients

**A**CAAI will sponsor a pilot project designed to obtain data on the outcome of medications used to treat allergic and asthmatic patients who are pregnant.

The Registry for Allergic and/or Asthmatic Pregnant Patients will be funded through an unrestricted educational grant from Rhône-Poulenc Rorer (RPR).

ACAAI members will be surveyed within the next month or so to determine their interest in participating in the two-year pilot project, which is being coordinated by Dr. Myron A. Lipkowitz, Chairman of the ACAAI Pregnancy Committee, and Dr. Michael Schatz.

The pilot study will monitor the progress of pregnant asthmatic patients who are using inhaled corticosteroids.

The principal goal of the study is to gather data that supports the use of currently available medications—as well as newer drugs as they become available—to achieve positive outcomes for mothers who are being treated for allergic problems.

The decision to use a registry to track pregnant asthmatic patients was based on the recommendations from members of an RPR task force. ❖

# Allergists surveyed on scratch & wipe technique

More than 86 percent of the allergists attending the Annual Meeting reported that neither they nor their technicians have ever experienced an accidental needle stick while performing a scratch-and-wipe skin-testing procedure.

In a separate survey, 76 percent of allied health personnel reported they have never suffered an accidental needle stick while performing this procedure.

The two surveys were prompted by a request from OSHA for more information on the frequency of the scratch-and-wipe method and its potential risks for accidental puncture.

The allied health survey revealed that slightly more than half of the respondents use this technique in their office.

Fifty-two percent of the allied health personnel surveyed disagreed with the statement that “an accidental stick from a skin-testing needle would be a low risk for the transfer of hepatitis or AIDS to the allergy technician because the needle doesn’t have enough of the patient’s blood on it to matter much;” one-fourth agreed with that statement, while 22 percent were undecided.

Other survey findings of the allied health professionals revealed that:

- 57 percent of the individuals who use this technique wear protection (latex or other gloves) while testing
- 77 percent of those who use the scratch-and-wipe method wipe the needle while holding the gauze or pad with their free hand. ❖



## Clemens von Pirquet winners

The 1996 Clemens von Pirquet Award winners—pictured here with outgoing ACAAI Auxiliary President Nona Nan Chapman (center)—are, from left, Drs. Robert Chrzanowski, Angelos Koutsonikolis, Kathryn Ferrell Hobbs, Vincent Christopher Tubiolo, Jaya Mary Theratill, Timothy Pham, and Joe Bruno LaRussa. The Auxiliary sponsors the annual awards.



# College installs Ira Finegold as president

**D**r. Ira Finegold, of New York City, was installed as president of the College during the Nov. 14 Annual Business Meeting in Dallas. Dr. Finegold succeeds Dr. Diane E. Schuller, of Hershey, PA.

In addition, Dr. Betty Wray, of Augusta, GA, was named President-Elect; and Dr. Jean A. Chapman, of Cape Girardeau, MO, became vice president.

An ACAAI Fellow since 1974, Dr. Finegold currently is assistant attending physician at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York City. He also is associate director of Beth Israel's Allergy Division and an associate attending physician at St. Lukes-Roosevelt, also in New York City. Dr. Finegold is a private practitioner in Manhattan and Westchester County, New York.

An ACAAI Fellow since 1983, Dr. Wray is Professor of Pediatrics and Medicine, Chief of the Allergy-Immunology Section, and Vice Chairman of the Department of Pediatrics at the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta. She also is a member of the following ACAAI committees: Executive, Finance, Planning, Annual Program, and Allergy/Immunology Training Program Directors' Advisory Committee. ❖



*Newly elected members of the ACAAI Board are (standing, from left) regent Dr. David B. Engler and Vice President Dr. Jean A. Chapman; and (sitting, from left) regents Drs. Joann Blessing-Moore and Timothy J. Sullivan III, and FIT representative Dr. Boyce Hornberger.*

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## Consortium selects new asthma camp sites

The Consortium for Childrens' Asthma Camps last month selected new sites for its 1996-97 Phase II Inner-City Initiative. The sites are in Minneapolis; Orange County, CA; Dayton, OH; San Francisco; Tulsa, OK; and Tacoma, WA.

ACAAI has been a major supporter of this initiative, which offers asthma camps for disadvantaged, inner-city children.

In addition to the asthma camps, pre- and post-surveys will be conducted. Six family sessions also will be held during the year.

"There is a tremendous potential for success because the program is family-centered and community-based," ACAAI Asthma Camps Committee Chairman Dr. Stephen C. Weisberg said.

Participants will be identified and selected through their membership in the Medicaid program of a managed care organization.

Dr. Weisberg said the inner-city initiative is the only program in the country that involves pharmaceutical and managed care companies working with allergists.

"The concept of allergists working with managed care companies to develop a national model for chronic disease management is exciting, and obviously the College has taken the lead," Dr. Weisberg said.

Managed care companies in each of the sites will track patients one year before the initiative begins and again one year into the program. ❖

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### Message continued from page 2

"Is Allergen Immunotherapy Effective in Asthma?" (Amer J Respir Crit Care Med 151:969-974, 1995), which reports a meta analysis of published randomized, controlled trials involving allergen immunotherapy. The authors conclude that "allergen immunotherapy

is a treatment option in highly selected patients with extrinsic ("allergic") asthma." This is an article that can be shown to any doubters of the efficacy of immunotherapy in asthma.

This, my first newsletter, would not be complete without thanking all the participants at our Annual Meeting

in Dallas. We have received glowing comments about the meeting, and it is due to the many participants and planners who work so hard and long for the benefit of all allergists and immunologists. Thank you, each and every one, for your magnificent efforts. ❖

# News and Notes ...

## Visiting professors program extended through 1997

Thanks to an unrestricted grant from Hoechst Marion Roussel, Inc., ACAAI will continue its Visiting Professor program through 1997.

The ACAAI program provides two days of intensive training by College members in allergy, asthma and immunology at U.S. medical schools,

hospitals and clinics with primary care training programs.

In addition, the program helps to solve the problem of serious underrepresentation of allergy/immunology training on medical school faculties nationwide and encourages growing interest in clinical immunology. ❖

## Central office now part of information superhighway

The information superhighway now has a new rider—the College's executive

One of the first actions was to create a temporary World Wide Web site.

The purchase of a permanent Internet connection or domain was deferred until the board can evaluate the central office's new E-mail capacity, new temporary web site, and the quality of upgrades being made to AllerComm 2000.

The Board also requested its committees to develop educational materials for dissemination on the ACAAI "home page." ❖

*The ACAAI central office now has an E-mail address with America On Line. The address is: [acaai@aol.com](mailto:acaai@aol.com)*

office. The ACAAI Board of Regents last month approved several actions designed to take advantage of the latest information-processing technology.

## Annals supplement available to non-Academy members

The ACAAI/AAAAI Joint Committee on Practice Parameters has developed new practice parameters on Allergic Diagnostic Testing and on Diagnosis and Treatment of Asthma.

The parameters on Allergic Diagnostic Testing were published in a supplement to the December issue of the Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. Meanwhile, the parameters on the Diagnosis and Treatment of Asthma

were published in a supplement to the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology.

College members who are not members of the Academy can order the Practice Parameters on Diagnosis and Treatment of Asthma by writing to ACAAI, Practice Parameters, 85 W. Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60005, or faxing their request to (847) 427-1294. There is no charge for this service. ❖

## Annual Meeting available now on CD-ROM

ACAAI has done it again! The College recorded its 1995 Annual Meeting on interactive CD-ROM.

Dr. Michael S. Blaiss served as medical editor of the project, which is funded through an educational grant from Rhône-Poulenc Rorer. Refer to the enclosed order form for more details.

Three years ago, ACAAI was the first medical organization to record its annual meeting on CD-ROM.

The CME Needs Assessment Survey showed that 64 percent of the allergists attending the Annual Meeting own a CD-ROM player. ❖

*Campaign continued from page 1*

Through a series of public relations activities and materials, the campaign will educate asthma patients about ways to improve their quality of life. These materials also will raise patient and provider awareness about the safety and efficacy of inhaled steroids for the primary control of chronic asthma.

The ACAAI Board of Regents approved the program during its Nov. 9 meeting in Dallas. College President Dr. Ira Finegold assigned a six-member task force to work with ASTRA and the other asthma industry partners to flesh out the objectives and the implementation plan.

ACAAI Board member Dr. Susan R. Wynn will chair the task force, which includes Board members Drs. Joann Blessing-Moore and Richard J. Morris; and College members Nancy K. Ostrom, Mark C. Wilson, and Terence Carey. ❖