

## The Pennsylvania Radiological Society

A Chapter of the American College of Radiology

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Richard N. Taxin, MD, FACR**  
Upland, PA

This is a tale of several cities. Different cities. Same exhortation. As I write this I am sitting in the **Minneapolis-St. Paul** airport after attending the Republican National Convention as the "guest" of my wife, who was attending as an elected member of the Pennsylvania delegation. The convention was a truly unique experience. I was part of the crowd at the Xcel Center in **St. Paul** when Sarah Palin gave the speech of a lifetime in the most charged atmosphere I can ever remember – think an Eagles or Steelers playoff game on steroids. Her ascendancy to the nomination shows that in politics (as in most of life), prepare for the unexpected. After interacting with members of the PA delegation, my concerns regarding physicians' lack of involvement in the political process were reinforced. Several state representatives and senators with whom I spoke all voiced the same plea – "the doctors need to be more involved to affect their own destinies." A word to the wise should be sufficient. Get involved!

I went to Minnesota anxious to experience first-hand a political convention, listen to the speeches, and meet the delegates. The women and men attending the convention as delegates from Pennsylvania were sincere, hard-working, and committed people. Only a minority of the delegates were the actual legislators, but they will be the ones returning to **Harrisburg** and **Washington, D.C.** in the fall.

Make no mistake. These legislators who will be returning to our state and national capitols will be deciding the future of radiology and medicine – the future for both patients and physicians.

There are several issues developing in our state capital that are of concern to Pennsylvania radiologists. Before the House Rules Committee in **Harrisburg** is HB 2434. This bill will mandate that any entity performing diagnostic imaging services send a written summary of the results to the patient. This extra reporting mandated by the bill will place an unnecessary burden on radiologists and will have a significant financial impact on our practices. The PRS and its representatives intend to be actively involved in this legislative process.

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The State Department of Health has made an interpretation of regulations that requires that anyone ordering a diagnostic imaging study to be performed in a PA hospital must be both a hospital staff member and a PA-licensed physician. The negative implications of this ruling on our practices should be obvious. The PRS has had discussions and will continue to have discussions regarding this issue with representatives of the Department of Health. In addition, Certificate of Need is once again being placed onto the front burner in the legislature. The PRS will be involved. You must be too. Get involved!

There can be little doubt that once the new Congress starts in January the drumbeat for a national health system or national health insurance program will begin. If Senator Obama is elected, there will be a huge change in the way we are reimbursed for our services and how health services are delivered. If Senator McCain is elected, there will be change – only the degree is in question. In any case, physicians must try to have input. Speak to your legislators. Get involved!

At the PRS Fall Meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup> an all-star cast will be speaking to you about these issues and more. Right now, like everyone else, I have a cloudy crystal ball. But by the time we're all together in **Philadelphia** the future may be slightly less hazy. However, one thing is certain – if we physicians don't begin to become more involved we and our patients will get what we don't deserve. See you in Philly. Get involved!

### **EDITOR'S COLUMN**

**Thomas S. Chang, MD, FACR  
Pittsburgh, PA**

### **Join the Fun at our Annual Meeting**

Now that fall is upon us, that can mean only one thing: time for our Society's Annual Meeting and time to reconnect with friends from across the state. Well, actually, from across the commonwealth, if you want to get technical. This got me thinking, what's the difference between a state and a commonwealth? And how many commonwealths do we have in the U.S.? For all you inquiring minds out there in the Keystone Commonwealth (no, that just doesn't sound right), there are four commonwealths: Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Virginia, and Kentucky. I learned that there's really no practical difference between states and commonwealths in how they're governed, but landowners in commonwealths apparently do not own mineral or oil rights to their land. I bet you didn't know that.

But I digress. As we've gotten busier and busier in our radiology practices, we've lost much of the collegiality that used to exist in our field. I remember when I started practicing in 1991, the Pittsburgh Roentgen Society had a very active membership and monthly meetings that were combined socializing/learning events. Attendance was high from both practicing radiologists and residents. But over the years, attendance kept declining as reimbursements dropped, practices stopped hiring, radiologists worked more hours, residents' call duties expanded, and everyone got too tired to attend monthly meetings.

The Pittsburgh Roentgen Society still has an Annual Social that helps us keep connected with other radiologists in our community. But I find that the younger radiologists just aren't as involved as we used to be at their age. That's a shame. However, I'm happy to see enthusiasm in the Residents and Fellows Section of the ACR and in our

Society. It's promising to see a good turnout from the residents at our Annual Meetings. As I said, the Annual Meeting is a time to reconnect with friends from across the state. But it's also a time to connect with the new faces in our specialty and foster their budding interest in organized radiology. Let's keep welcoming them with open arms.

As outlined in the Annual Meeting program in this issue, Bob Pyatt has once again lined up an excellent set of speakers. He somehow manages to secure renowned speakers every year, without fail, which benefits all of us who attend the meetings. We all owe him a huge debt of gratitude for his tireless efforts. This year, there are talks about business, politics, hospital-doctor relations, and the Boards, among others. I'm sure they will all be interesting and thought-provoking. The Honored Radiologist this year is Nick Bryan from the University of Pennsylvania and who is among the leadership at the ACR. We are fortunate to have such a leader from our state.

### **Unfunded Mandates**

Rich Taxin notes in his President's Message that there is a bill going through the Pennsylvania legislature that will mandate all radiology and laboratory test results be sent directly to patients. This would obviously be a big expense for all of us, as well-intentioned as it may be. He and our lobbyists, the Klines, are spearheading our response to the legislation. If you have any comments on this issue, please contact Rich

### **The Last Laugh**

This one comes to us from, of all places, my parents' Korean newspaper. I guess having fun at the expense of lawyers must be universal, not confined to just litigious states and countries like ours.

"A minister and lawyer were chatting at a party. 'What do you do if you make a mistake on a case?' the minister asked. 'Try to fix it if it's big, ignore it if it's insignificant,' replied the lawyer. 'What do you do?' The minister replied, 'Oh, more or less the same. Let me give you an example. The other day I meant to say, 'the devil is the father of liars,' but instead I said, 'the devil is the father of lawyers.'" So I let it go."

See you in Philadelphia in mid-November. The new venue for our meeting is supposed to be fabulous hotel. I'm looking forward to seeing it and all of you. Happy Fall!

### **2008 ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE**

**Robert S. Pyatt, Jr., MD, FACR  
Chambersburg, PA**

### **Ritz Carlton Hotel, Philadelphia, PA, Nov. 15, 2008**

The program will be accredited for 7.5 hours of Category 1 credit. Here is a draft of the program ideas, with speakers and times:

<b>ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>
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**Morning Program**

- 8:00-8:30 am James Thrall, MD, FACR, Chairman, Board of Chancellors, ACR. "Update on Issues Challenging Radiology & Radiation Oncology Across the Nation."
- 8:30-9:15 am James Borgstede, MD, FACR. "Radiology Commoditization: Creativity or Catastrophe?"
- 9:15-9:45 am Ted Burnes, RADPAC. "The Radiological/Political Implications of the New President and Congress"
- 9:45-10:00 am Coffee Break
- 10:00-10:30 am James Borgstede, MD, FACR & R. Nick Bryan, MD, PhD, FACR. "Issues Facing the ABR"
- 10:30-11:15 am Roger Mecum, Executive VP, Pennsylvania Medical Society. "The State of the State of Medicine in Pennsylvania: A Critical Update on the Vital Signs"
- 11:15-11:45 am James Thrall, MD, FACR, Chair, Department of Radiology, Massachusetts General Hospital. "The Changing Relationships between Hospitals and Radiologists" (based on two articles in *Radiology* recently)
- 11:45-11:55 Final Questions and Answers for all morning speakers
- 11:55-12:00 PRS Business meeting

**Lunch Program**

Arlen Spector, US Senate (Requested, not yet confirmed) "Observations/ Comments on the 2008 Presidential/Congressional Election." Backup Speakers: Eric Faerber, MD, "Update on *Image Gently* Campaign" and Larry Muroff, MD, FACR, topic TBA.

**Afternoon Program**

- 1:00-1:45 pm Larry Muroff, MD, FACR. "Challenges Facing Radiology: Is Chicken Little Correct?"
- 1:45-2:30 pm Frank Lexa, MD, MBA, FACR. "21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges to the Practice of Radiology"
- 2:30-2:45 pm Coffee Break.
- 2:45-3:30 pm Laurence Needleman, MD, FACR. "How to Deal with IV Contrast Emergencies"
- 3:30-4:15 pm Frank Lexa, MD, MBA, FACR. "Strategic Business Planning for Radiologists"
- 4:15-4:30 pm Questions and Answers

**Evening Program** for the Honored Radiologist (R. Nick Bryan, MD, PhD, FACR)

Larry Muroff, MD, FACR. "Would Disney Run Your Practice Better Than You Do?"

**Breast Imaging Fellowship**

Available starting February 1, 2009, or July 1, 2009. This position is funded. The Fellow will join dedicated breast imagers who enjoy state-of-the-art breast imaging equipment that includes five full-field digital units, two stereo tables, multiple ultrasound units, and two MRI units. The imagers work closely with dedicated breast surgeons. Multiple biopsy devices are utilized. There is dedicated time with surgery and pathology.

To receive further information, please call William R. Poller, MD, FACR Allegheny General Hospital, 320 East North Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15212-4772. Telephone: 412-359-8366, FAX: 412-359-6263, Pager: 412-359-8220 ID 4544, E-mail: [wpoller@wpahs.org](mailto:wpoller@wpahs.org).

**Outpatient Practice Opportunity – Tristan Associates (Harrisburg area)**

Tristan Associates, a 15-physician Diagnostic Radiology practice is seeking two Board-Certified Radiologists: one general / body imaging specialist and one women's imaging specialist, to join their group practice. Tristan Associates' Women's Imaging Center has been designated as a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiology. This is an excellent opportunity to join an outpatient practice with multiple offices in Central Pennsylvania with over a 40-year history of quality and success. A generous salary and benefits package, along with ample vacation and one year to partnership, are being offered.

Please contact James J. Digiandomenico, Director of Human Resources, Tristan Associates, 4520 Union Deposit Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111. E-mail: [jdigiandomenico@tristans.com](mailto:jdigiandomenico@tristans.com), Fax: 717-909-6568.

**Body Imagers – Diagnostic Imaging, Inc. (Philadelphia area)**

Diagnostic Imaging, Inc. (DII), the largest private radiology group in the Philadelphia area, is seeking highly qualified body imaging candidates to help support our unprecedented growth. DII is a group of fellowship-trained radiologists offering top-quality services at several Philadelphia-area hospitals and two outpatient MRI facilities. Our group has been in existence for over 30 years and has recently expanded with the addition of several new hospitals. DII offers candidates the opportunity to work at a location near your home in Philadelphia and the surrounding suburbs, and provides a friendly and cooperative work environment. Our radiologists are among the most highly skilled practitioners, performing cutting-edge procedures including coronary CTA, CT colonography and breast MRI. Additional body imagers would complement our practice and participate in exciting growth opportunities. We offer competitive salaries, full benefits, quality PACS, and Nighthawk coverage. Full-time and part-time positions are available.

Visit our website at [diiradiology.com](http://diiradiology.com). Contact Jaime Checkoff, MD, at 215-612-5157, or fax CV to 215-612-5077.