



# NEWSLETTER

of the **Association of Military  
Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons**

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## AMOPS Shows the Flag at the AOA House of Delegates in Chicago

Each year the AMOPS delegation to the AOA's House of Delegates stands out. AMOPS represents the interests of those DOs in the uniformed services, has the flags of the US. And the services on it table and even now when several delegates have retired from active duty many wear the uniform of service to country.

### Delegation Size the Major Controversy

Because the House of Delegates fills all the space available at the Fairmont Hotel, a resolution was introduced to freeze the size of the number of delegates. So as the size of the profession continues to grow, the number of DO represented by each delegate would increase.

This generated a great deal of debate as some states wished to maintain the current system even if it meant having to find a larger venue to host the meeting. Other states wanted to avoid increased costs to send more delegates as their membership numbers increased.

### AMOPS Unique Position Forgotten by Some

When the resolution to change the representation formula was proposed it ignored the fact that AMOPS is a non-geographic divisional society. The wording of the resolution would have reduced the AMOPS delegation to one person no matter how many DOs were in uniform. AMOPS tried to amend the resolution's wording in committee, but when that failed AMOPS opposed the resolution on the floor of the house, identifying the failure of the resolution to recognize that the uniformed services boundaries were literally world-wide rather than contained within a single state. Most of the delegates had never given that a thought as they debated representation formulas.

### Resolution of the Problem Postponed

The AMOPS delegation's opposition helped to defeat the resolution, leaving the decision on how to find room for all of the meeting functions to next year. AMOPS presence at AOA functions serves to remind the profession of the unique aspects of uniformed service and the need to keep that in mind when making rules that effect all osteopathic physicians, not just those in state societies and

### Mark Your Calendars Now

Reserve **May 3 to May 6, 2012**, and join us at GA PCOM in Suwanee, Georgia (suburban Atlanta) for AMOPS 29th National CME Conference.

Program updates will be posted on our website, [www.amops.org](http://www.amops.org) as they are developed.

If there are topics you want on the program, speakers you want to hear or a presentation you want to make, let me hear from you at: [jim@amops.org](mailto:jim@amops.org)

### How AMOPS Gets House Delegates

The AMOPS HOD delegation is based on the number of AOA members identified as uniformed osteopathic physicians not the number that pay their AMOPS dues.

What this means is that an increasing number of individuals are taking advantage of the AOA's 25% discount on membership dues for active duty military, but are not paying their AMOPS dues.

For us to represent you well, we need to hear from you. Share your ideas on the future of AMOPS at our Yahoo Group, with a link to it on the AMOPS website or visit Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Association-of-Military-Osteopathic-Physicians-and-Surgeons-AMOPS/174099052663086>

AMOPS is your organization, make the most of it and bring along a friend. If all the DOs claiming the AOA discount for uniformed osteopathic physicians paid AMOPS dues, we would easily cover our operating costs instead of eating into our reserve.

Please go to the AMOPS website [www.amops.org](http://www.amops.org)

1. Download the AOA Census Form.
2. Fill it out.
3. Send it in to AOA.

This is how they decide how many delegates AMOPS sends to the AOA House of Delegates.

## On Target



**CDR Eugene Concepcion  
AMOPS President**

Dear Colleagues,



First, I would like to send a heartfelt salute to the men and women currently on active duty and standing watch in harms way. As the September 11 attacks return the forefront of this month's remembrances, last May's news of the

death of OBL is bittersweet in lieu of all who paid the ultimate sacrifice in our nation's response. A special salute to the families associated with the helicopter carrying twenty SEALS this past August. For those who have served, are serving (Joe, Cheryl), or are planning to serve—God bless you all.

### Ciao from Naples, Italy.

I received a call a couple months ago from one of my former medical school mentors. In this age of inter-net and social networking, I was found of all places on the AMOPS website! Dr." K" was my preceptor during my rural clinic rotation nearly 20 years ago! Talk about great memories for an MS-4 on a rural clinic externship. I can remember the one and only time I received homemade banana bread as a thank you for care. It was under the tutelage of a caring primary care DO that made that rotation – Thanks Dr. K for remembering. Since on the subject of thanking mentors—Thanks Allan.

This is a bit of a nostalgic column for me as it marks the one-year anniversary of my role as AMOPS president. Nearly two quarters have passed since our yearly conference in San Antonio. Do any of you remember how at this conference, RADM Jeffries seemed so comfortable in his civilian retiree attire but sounded every part the executive warfighter advocate?

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As our next conference in Atlanta approaches this spring, I look forward to AMOPS serving as a mentorship tool for our medical students and junior officers embarking on their medical military careers. Some of you senior officers will again share retirement advice. Others will help map out internship or residency selection strategies. Others may offer active duty promotion steps. Bonded by an osteopathic-principled upbringing, the success of our organization is dependent on our ability to foster junior officer leadership and demonstrate private practice successes. And just in case any of you are wondering about an overseas move, I hope to be able to provide that information. I will have fresh recollections of what it was like to schedule your household goods move, how to pack out for your express vs. storage shipment, making the move with small children, and about renting your home. Those are the I am currently working on as my family starts this next tour here in Naples, Italy. I hope this note finds you all well.

Eugenio "Gene" Conception  
CDR, MC, USN  
Staff Surgeon, NAVHOSP Naples, Italy

### Osteopathic Pledge of Commitment.

I pledge to:

- provide compassionate, quality care to my patients;
- partner with them to promote health;
- display integrity and professionalism throughout my career;
- advance the philosophy, practice and science of osteopathic medicine;
- continue lifelong learning;
- support my profession with loyalty in action, word and deed; and
- live each day as an example of what an osteopathic physician should be.

### COE Nominations Welcome

Nominations for additions to the Conclave of Eagles (COE) membership may be made by any AMOPS member. Additions to the Conclave are voted on by current Conclave members. New additions to the COE and those who were not able to recognize this year will be honored at our next CME conference.

**Nominations due by December 31, 2011**

If you have someone to recommend, to add their wise counsel to the Conclave or that you feel should be recognized for past contributions to uniformed osteopathic medicine, please submit their names and a short narrative of why they should be considered to me. [jim@amops.org](mailto:jim@amops.org)

### A Day to Remember Reflections on 911, Ten Years Later Jim Yonts, AMOPS ExDir

There are certain days that stand out in our lives as individuals and as a nation due to some defining experience.

For young couples it may be the day they first met. For parents the day their first child was born. For sports fans it might be the day their team won the championship.

For nations it is the triumphs and tragedies that bring us together in joy or sorrow and make us one people in spite of our differences.

Those with long memories know where they were when President Kennedy was assassinated and we grieved together. Those with even longer memories remember where they were when "Victory in Japan" was declared and we all claimed it for our own.

If you served in Vietnam you remember the fall of Saigon and the overwhelming sense of loss and frustration. When the Berlin Wall fell, all those who had experienced it felt a sense of hope for tomorrow.

The space program brought us the thrill of the first step on the moon and the disbelief and sorrow of the Challenger explosion.

No doubt you know where you were when airliners became weapons and a war we didn't fully comprehend got our attention on September 11, 2001. It brought us together as a nation in sorrow for those who were killed that day and determination that we could not allow evil to triumph.

Tragedy has the capacity to bring out the best and worst in both individuals and nations.

As we look back on the events ten years ago, we should remember the sense of compassion for the victims and the unity of purpose we all shared that day.

One thing that makes the United States unique in the world is our capacity to find hope for the future and a sense of purpose even in a time of tragedy. Our ability to bring together a nation of different races, colors, and creeds is unequalled. But sometimes we get distracted by day to day problems until something causes us to come together.

We shouldn't have to wait for the next disaster to find that spirit again. That would truly be a tragedy.

### Finding Cancer Cells Instead of Mines

Research intended to help find undersea mines can also help classify and identify cancer cells. The software toolkit, FARSIGHT, identifies cells based on a subset of examples labeled by a physician. Adding the active learning software algorithms developed by Naval research provides a more accurate and consistent result and requires the physician to label fewer cell samples.

### Part of Limb Artificially Re-grown

A woman from Hampshire, United Kingdom, became one of the first people outside clinical trials to have part of a limb artificially re-grown in a laboratory and put back in her body. A pea-sized piece of cartilage containing 200,000 cells from her knee, grew it to four million cells and placed back in her knee. The report from BBC news, September 28th, provides hope for improved future recovery.

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### Concern Over Off-label Drug Use

CENTCOM continues to back the use of Seroquel to treat insomnia even though the Defense Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee at a meeting in May indicated that the Food and Drug Administration had not approved any drugs in the class known as atypical antipsychotics (including Seroquel) for the treatment of insomnia.

At this time CENTCOM has no plan to remove 25-milogram Serouel from the theater formulary. This is in spite of concern expressed by some physicians that the drug induces sleep by blunting emotions and reducing frontal lobe activity and thus may not recognize that their higher mental functions and judgment have been impaired.

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### Caring for the Elderly

As the general population continues to age, more and more of military families are caring for parents. In the October issue of Military Officer, RADM Joyce Johnson, USPHS-Ret, DO, has a series of recommendations you might want to share with your patients. For more health and wellness resources to share with your patients, visit the following site: [www.moaa.org/wellness](http://www.moaa.org/wellness)

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### AMOPS Goes Social

AMOPS continues to look for ways to serve you better. We now have an AMOPS FACEBOOK site. The student AMOPS (SAMOPS) group also has a FACEBOOK page and as you might guess the student page has had more activity. We encourage you to visit and share your thoughts and information.

### Leg Brace Allows Soldier to Redeploy

A soldier wounded in Afghanistan in 2010, with stops in Landstuhl, Walter Reed and San Antonio may redeploy next year. After more than 30 surgeries extensive physical therapy and almost ten months in a wheelchair, he could walk with a cane and a limp. But he wanted more, and the Center for the Intrepid met his desire, fitting him for a carbon and fiberglass brace. With the Intrepid Dynamic Exoskeletal Orthosis (IDEO) custom fit brace, he can run, jump, climb, and meet the deployment standard.

## Video Games Improve Motor Function

A Johns Hopkins study reported on-line in the "Journal of Critical Care" on the safety and feasibility of using interactive video games to complement regular physical therapy in the ICU.

The study looked at 22 critically ill adult patients over a one-year period. These patients participated in 42 physical therapy sessions that included the use of Nintendo Wii and Wii Fit video games.

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## Laughter, the Best Medicine

You have heard about laughter being the best medicine, now a study tries to add science to anecdote. Tests were conducted that monitored volunteers pain tolerance while they watched comedy clips or non-humorous clips of golf or wildlife.

Just 15 minutes of laughter increased the pain tolerance by around 10 percent. This change appears to come from endorphins, just a physical exercise can induce a sense of well being. "Very little research has been done into why we laugh and what role it plays in society," said Robin Dunbar, head of the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Oxford.

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## Combat Stress Normalizes Over Time

Soldiers returning from combat have heightened activity in the part of the brain that regulates fear but this usually normalizes around 18 months according to a study published in the journal Molecular Psychiatry.

The small study (23 soldiers who served in Afghanistan and 16 soldiers that did not deploy) underwent a brain MRI scan while being shown images of angry and fearful faces. Tests were conducted before and after deployment and a year and a half later.

The amygdala, the part of the brain that modulates fear, arousal and facial recognition, tends to be overactive in soldiers recently returned from deployment causing increased irritability and heightened sensitivity to perceived threats.

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American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine President, Stephen Shannon, DO, has asked for your support in protecting Graduate Medical Education from devastating cuts by the Congressional super-committee. There are a variety of proposals to cut funding. While AMOPS does not lobby Congress, you have the right as an individual to make your concerns known to your representatives. Visit: <http://www.house.gov>, <http://www.senate.gov> or <http://www.aacom.org> and share your personal concerns.

## Air Barrier System Reduces Site Contamination

The Air Barrier System, or ABS, creates a "cocoon" of highly pure air that surrounds a surgical incision site. The cocoon isolates the incision from ambient air to prevent the bacteria present in the operating room from infecting the patient.

During surgery, bacteria are continuously shed by operating room personnel into the air and can subsequently settle in and around an incision site. The organisms, such as Staphylococcus aureus, are a major cause of infections in prosthesis implant surgeries such as hip and knee replacements. The portable ABS device prevents contamination without disrupting the surgical procedure or impeding access to the incision area, making the device relatively easy to use. The ABS consists of two components: A non-sterile, reusable blower unit that provides the source of HEPA filtered air, and a sterile, disposable nozzle that is affixed onto the surgical drape adjacent to the incision.

<http://nimbicsystems.com/>

## Tests Miss Some Troubled Troops

A new study, reported in the Archives of General Psychiatry, suggests that the mental health assessments given to all soldiers returning from deployment may miss many cases of depression or post-traumatic stress disorder. Soldiers taking the test anonymously, were two to four time more likely to report mental health problems.

However, the test is usually not given anonymously. Due to concerns about how reporting mental health issues might impact their military career or the idea that if they are not bleeding they are not hurt there appears to be a significant underreporting of the issue.

The point is not that the test does not work but rather that more strategies are needed to insure that returning soldiers get the mental health services they need. <http://archpsycama-assn.org>

## Senior V-P/Chief Medical Quality Officer

David B. Canton DO asked AMOPS if we could find someone looking for an opportunity at the St. Joseph Hospital System headquartered in Orange, California. [www.stjhs.org](http://www.stjhs.org)

They are looking for a:

DO or MD (MPH, MBA, MMM or Masters); Reputation for clinical excellence, innovation and collaboration; Track record in quality management and performance improvement; Agility in applying LEAN Six Sigma to clinical redesign, integration and performance improvement;

Ability to strategically, politically and operationally understand and communicate physician concerns and issues within a highly matrixed organization. To learn more contact:

[Nancy.Helfman@Divsearch.com](mailto:Nancy.Helfman@Divsearch.com)



The first 100 people to register for the AMOPS CME conference May 3-6, 2012, at GA PCOM, will receive an AMOPS water bottle during the conference.



The SAMOPS chapter at CCOM put on the 2011 SAMOPS Charity Physical Fitness Test to benefit the Wounded Warrior Project. While they used the Army standards with the assistance of local Army recruiters, they are thinking they will rotate services each year.



The SAMOPS chapter at CCOM charged \$15 which included a t-shirt and the event raised close to \$700 for the Wounded Warrior Project. The students at CCOM hope that other SAMOPS chapters will consider holding similar events on their campus.

A flyer and order form are available from CCOM so that all a chapter would have to do is change the date and school logo, which could save them some time if they decided to move forward with a similar event.

For more information or samples contact the CCOM SAMOPS chapter president, 2LT Alex Dew:

[alex499@gmail.com](mailto:alex499@gmail.com)



AMOPS 2011 AOA House of Delegates delegation from the left: AMOPS ExDir Jim Yonts; Col Max Clark; CAPT Darrell Lovins; LT Vi Song Tring; 2LT Michael Swift; CAPT David Wright; CAPT Wayne Mc Bride; CAPT Michael Murphy; and CAPT Teresa Brennan. CAPT Allan Finley who served as an alternate is not pictured.

Your AMOPS delegation shows the flag literally as well as adding some needed perspective for the osteopathic profession, as to what it means to be in the uniformed services rather than a group or private practice.



Murray Goldstein, DO, is presented his Conclave of Eagles (CoE) certificate from Conclave member RADM Ret. Joyce Johnson, USPHS. with the assistance of AMOPS ExDir Jim Yonts. Dr. Goldstein was the first DO to achieve flag status in the uniformed services while serving in the public health service. Dr. Goldstein continues to serve as an educator but does not travel overnight due to his wife poor health, so he was unable to join us in San Antonio. RADM Johnson and your executive director visited him at his home to present his recognition.



James Lally, DO, receives his Conclave of Eagles (CoE) certificate from AOA President, Karen Nichols, DO, while AMOPS executive Director Jim Yonts looks on. The CoE is an AMOPS recognition but is normally presented during the annual AMOPS CME conference with the assistance of the AOA president. As Dr. Lally was unable to attend the conference in San Antonio, Dr. Nichols was happy to repeat her participation during the AOA House of Delegates.

**The agenda for our 29th national CME conference at GA PCOM, (suburban Atlanta) is still incomplete. This is your chance to be heard, send ideas for topics you want to hear or volunteer to speak on a topic your peers can use to improve their patient care. While we can't provide speaker transportation, we can offer reduced conference fees for speakers.**

**We anticipate a four-day (May 3-6,2012) program with 30 hours of AOA approved Category 1A CME. We will seek other accreditation as well. Tell your friends and bring them with you to Georgia. Please let me hear from you at: [jim@amops.org](mailto:jim@amops.org)**