



Summer 2002 American College of Surgeons

# Newsletter

OHIO CHAPTER

## President's Message

by Robert Falcone, MD, FACS, President

### Focus on Advocacy



Robert Falcone

The Ohio Chapter is looking toward a new focus on advocacy in the State of Ohio. For years, the chapter has relied heavily on our membership's voluntary efforts to support advocacy on important surgical socioeconomic issues within the state. In some regards, these efforts have been successful; for example, recent trauma legislation and breast surgery informed consent. The chapter has also benefited from the support of other organizations (who have professional advocates), especially the Ohio State Medical Association, which has worked cooperatively with the chapter on issues of mutual interest.

The concept of our own lobbyist has been a popular discussion for many years. This year we have engaged the services of a Central Ohio consulting group, Capitol Consulting Group, Inc., to be our advocates. Mr. Dan Jones, the president of Capitol (whose report appears elsewhere in this newsletter), will be our contact as we move ahead.

It is clear that as a chapter and as individuals, we need to be personally involved in shaping our futures. Many issues, which affect our lives and the lives of our patients, are decided locally, not nationally. Having a local approach to advocacy, therefore, makes great sense. This year tort reform and malpractice premium reduction will be our priorities.

This is a time for all surgeons who are Fellows of the American College of Surgeons to stand together. We need to work, as one body, to effect the changes needed to deliver appropriate surgical care for our patients. Lobbying efforts will only work if each and every one of us participates. A capable lobbyist will open doors and supply us with needed information. Our legislators, however, want to talk and meet with us.

On a federal level, the Washington, DC, office of the ACS is quite active

and effective. The Web site has a very efficient mode of contacting our legislators, and I encourage you to take advantage of this important means of communication. On a state level, we plan to develop similar avenues of communication.

In the future, we will need to revisit the concept of a political action committee (PAC). The reality is that money speaks, allowing us to target our lobbying activities to key individuals and, most importantly, to help elect those individuals who share our vision and values.

For now we are not asking for additional funds, but we do request that you consider the timely payment of your dues and encourage your nonmember surgical colleagues to become Fellows of the Ohio Chapter in order to demonstrate their support of these important efforts.

We know this is a monumental, but exciting, move for the chapter. I intend to keep you informed as the process develops and ask that you provide me advice and input over the next year.

Thank you for opportunity to serve as your current president.

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# Falcone Elected : Congratulations to New Officers

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## 46th President

Robert E. Falcone, MD, FACS, Columbus, became the 46th President of the Ohio Chapter at the conclusion of the 47th annual spring meeting in Akron.

Dr. Falcone served as chair of the Ohio Committee on Trauma from 1995 to 2000. Under his leadership, the fruition of many previous chairs' efforts was realized—Ohio HB 138 passed, creating a statewide trauma system.

Dr. Falcone is currently senior operations officer for Grant Medical Center and Grant Riverside Medical Care Foundation Inc. He has served as director of trauma services at Riverside and as medical director of trauma services at Grant Medical Center. He was also medical co-director of MedFlight and LifeFlight and is a clinical professor of surgery at the OSU College of Medicine and the Ohio University College of Medicine.



E. Christopher Ellison

E. Christopher Ellison, MD, FACS, Columbus, was elected president-elect of the Ohio Chapter during the annual business meeting in Akron. Dr. Ellison is associate vice president for health sciences and vice dean of clinical affairs for The Ohio State University College of Medicine and Public Health; Robert M. Zollinger professor of surgery and chair of the Department of Surgery; and associate dean for surgical services.

Dr. Ellison's affiliation with the chapter began in 1980 when he was a first-place recipient of the Resident Essay Contest, a feat which he repeated in 1981. In 1986 he became a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and a member of the Ohio Chapter, and from 1992 to 1995 he was a member of the ACS Committee on Young Surgeons. In 1996 he was elected district councilor, and he served as program chair in 1997. In 1998 he was elected Ohio governor to the ACS, and in 1999 he was elected Ohio Chapter secretary.

Dr. Ellison earned his medical degree from the Medical College of Wisconsin and served his residency and a surgical gastroenterology research fellowship at The Ohio State University. He began his career in academic medicine in 1984 at The Ohio State University. He has served as secretary/treasurer and president of the Columbus Surgical Society, and as vice president of the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons.

Gary Williams, MD, FACS, Akron, was elected secretary of the chapter. Dr. Williams is a past district councilor and Membership Committee chair. He is currently an Ohio governor to the ACS. Christopher McHenry was reelected northeast district councilor for a four-year term; and Joseph Sferro, MD, FACS, Sylvania, was reelected northwest district councilor, also for a four-year term. Richard Reiling, MD, FACS, Columbus, was reelected delegate to the OSMA, and Mike Walker, MD, FACS, Columbus, was reelected alternate delegate to the OSMA.

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## Health Policy and Advocacy Committee Report

by Mike Walker, MD, FACS, Chair

The Health Policy and Advocacy (HPA) Committee, formerly the Socioeconomic Affairs Committee, now has a significant and new role as the result of the implementation of the strategic plan by the Ohio Chapter. As you have previously read, the Ohio Chapter has hired a full time lobbyist, Dan Jones of Capitol Consulting Group (see Dr. Falcone's message). We are one of the last of all the medical subspecialty groups in Ohio to have a full-time lobbyist in Columbus to express our needs to the state legislators and keep us informed of issues of importance to our group. All the members of the council are excited about the potential impact the Ohio Chapter can now make, but its members also are aware that we must become more thoroughly engaged if we are going to get the full benefits of our investment.

Members who have issues or who would like to become members of HPA Committee, please contact Jane Treiber or me through the chapter office, or email [ocacs@ocacs.meinet.com](mailto:ocacs@ocacs.meinet.com).

At the most recent meeting of the HPA Committee on May 9 in Akron, the primary issue discussed was the worsening mal-practice market in Ohio. Although not as much of a crisis yet as the situation in West Virginia or Pennsylvania, this issue is certainly headed in that direction. Indeed, this issue has touched a nerve with surgeons in the chapter. The chapter surveyed the membership on professional liability insurance approximately two weeks before the annual meeting and received more than 200 responses on short notice. This has been one of the best responses to a survey in

the chapter's history. The results will be published in a special newsletter that you will receive in September.

Also discussed at the HPA Committee meeting was tort reform—an important issue to the membership. **One of the things that the Fellowship can do to help bring tort reform to fruition is to actively support candidates for the Ohio Supreme Court who do not feel the need to legislate from the bench.** Two such candidates are *Maureen O'Connor* and *Evelyn Lundberg Stratton*. Changing the composition of the Supreme Court by one vote would have allowed the previously legislated tort reform bill to pass the Supreme Court appeal. We encourage you to support these candidates in every way possible but, most importantly, by actively going to the polls and voting.

# Meet the Ohio Chapter Lobbyist



Dan Jones

In May the Ohio Chapter entered into an agreement with Dan Jones, president of Capitol Consulting Group, Inc. (CCG), of Columbus, for legislative consulting services. Established in 1992, CCG's staff has a combined state house governmental affairs experience in excess of more than 50 years.

Dan Jones began his career as an employee of the Ohio House of Representatives working for Rep. Dale Van Vyven, who is currently chair of the House Health, Retirement and Aging Committee. From there he moved to the Ohio Senate where he served as a legislative aide to then State Senator Robert Ney. In 1985 Mr. Jones embarked upon his lobbying

career as Public Affairs Director for the Council of Retail Merchants. In 1989 Community Mutual Insurance Company retained Mr. Jones as manager of governmental affairs, and in 1990 Mr. Jones was recruited to serve as legislative liaison for Governor George Voinovich. After leaving the governor's office in 1992, Mr. Jones formed Capitol Consulting Group, where he has served the interests of a variety of association clients in industry and in the health care, waste, construction, and communications fields.

Dan Jones is a graduate of The Ohio State University with bachelor's degrees in international business and Russian language, and a master's degree in business administration.

## Treasurer's Report

by Michael E. Stark, MD, FACS  
mestark@sev.org

This is my final of three years as treasurer of the chapter. The economic times have changed drastically over the last two years, and the focus of how the chapter can serve its membership has also changed.

Two years ago, the council debated how to invest our long-term, rainy day funds. Although the equity market looked very appealing at the time, the council had the foresight to recognize that an equity position carried great risk. I am happy to report that although the return on the investments is not great, the principle is secure and there has been slow growth.

As previously reported, a strategic planning meeting identified that the chapter can best serve its membership with advocacy. The chapter has indeed retained a professional advocate to represent its interests at the state capital (refer to Dr. Falcone's message). The funding of this venture has come from a dues increase. The council did not wish to compromise on other activities and services provided to the membership. This activity is additional benefit to the membership.

In summary, the finances of the chapter are solid. We have been able to continue an excellent annual meeting dedicated to surgical academics, forge relationships with other organizations, support committees and communication, and enter the arena of advocacy.

Recruiting and maintaining membership is vital to the organization. Even with the dues increase, our dues structure is less than that of most physician and paraprofessional societies. All members can serve the chapter well by maintaining their membership and encouraging their colleague surgeons who are Fellows in the American College of Surgeons to make application to fellowship in their state chapter.

## Resident Research Awards 2002

### Bruce Robb, MD

1st Place, Stanley O. Hoerr Clinical Surgery Award  
University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati

"Prospective evaluation of quality of life in patients undergoing laparoscopic antireflux procedures"

### Steven R. Potter, MD

2nd Place, Clinical Science  
Division of Transplantation,  
University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati

"Laparoscopic donor nephrectomy in the super morbidly obese patient"

### David Giammar, MD

3rd Place, Clinical Science  
Grant Medical Center, Columbus

"Endorectal mucosal advancement flap for complex anorectal fistula not associated with inflammatory bowel disease"

### Nick Dobilovic, MD

4th Place, Clinical Science  
University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati

"Diltiazem prophylaxis reduces incidence of atrial fibrillation after coronary artery bypass grafting"

### John G. Zografakis, MD

1st Place, Basic Science  
Summa Health System, Falor Division  
Surgical Research, Akron

"Endoluminal reconstruction of the canine common biliary duct"

### Christopher Haughn, MD

2nd Place, Basic Science  
Summa Health System, Falor Division  
Surgical Research, Akron

"Feasibility of a veno-veno circuit as a central warming method in a severely hypothermic canine model"

### Andrew W. Knott, MD

3rd Place, Basic Science  
Cincinnati Children's Medical Center, Cincinnati

"Localization of epidermal growth factor receptor expression after intestinal resection using laser capture microdissection"

### Santosh Nandi, MD

Winner, Trauma  
Summa Health System, Falor Division  
Surgical Research, Akron

"Amnesia, neuroendocrine levels and PTSD in motor vehicle accident victims"

### Brian Badgwell, MD

John Peter Minton Cancer Award  
The Ohio State University, Columbus

"Interleukin-12 pre-treatments increase efficacy of interferon-alpha in melanoma"

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# Cancer Committee Report

by Michael E. Stark, MD, FACS, Chair  
mestark@sev.org

This is my last year to serve as chair of the Cancer Committee. Five years have passed since my initiation as the State Chair of Ohio of the Cancer Liaison Physician program. The advances in our committee will be stated in a future newsletter; however, the current direction can be summed up as collaboration.

Through what began as the TRIAD program for cancer prevention and control has emerged as a close working relationship with the American Cancer Society (ACS), the Ohio Department of Health, and the Ohio Cancer Registrar's Association (OCRA). Many others are also represented to formulate a cancer control plan for Ohio. This inclusive committee—five years in the making—is the Ohio Partners for Cancer Control (OPCC). Shortly after writing this article, I will attend a leadership institute sponsored by the ACS with other OPCC members to learn the skills to draft the cancer plan. I have also been invited to be the opening speaker at the state meeting of OCRA to discuss the process and the plan. There will be more information regarding this in future communications.

There are a couple of issues of vital importance to all cancer liaison physicians and their programs. The Facility Information Profile System (FIPS) is now live on the ACS Web site. This is a database listing all approved cancer programs that

have released their Level 1 and 2 data to the ACS. The public has access to this site and can search for approved cancer programs in their region. In order to review and approve a program's data, one must visit the data Web site on the American College of Surgeons Cancer Programs Web pages. Access to this area does require a password.

The National Cancer Data Base (NCDB) has its benchmark data on its Web site. This allows anyone to review and search parameters regarding cancer diagnoses. This information can also be found on the ACoS Web site under Cancer Programs.

Both of these sites were demonstrated live at the last committee meeting held in Akron. Also at this meeting were representatives from the Ohio Division of the ACS. Nancy Single, PhD, and Melinda Hill discussed the collaborative efforts of our two organizations. Both representatives should be present at the ACS leadership institute, and more information will be forthcoming. All cancer liaison physicians are encouraged to attend one of the national breakfast meetings held in conjunction with the ACoS Clinical Congress and the American Society of Clinical Oncology each year.

Please contact me for any questions or if help is needed in accessing the above-mentioned Web sites. My best wishes for a happy and safe summer time.

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## 2002 Surgery Resident Debt Survey

by William Wallace, MD,  
The Ohio State University  
College of Public Health  
and Medicine

The Resident Education Committee met February 15 in Columbus to review the preliminary results of the 2002 resident debt survey. A total of 48 Ohio general surgery residents responded to the survey. Of the respondents, 83 percent were male and 17 percent were female. Forty-eight percent were married; 42 percent were single. The average age of the respondent was 30.4 years, with modest diversity among the PGY years. About 60 percent owned homes with an average monthly house payment of \$1,027. Among renters, the average monthly rent was \$683.

Of particular interest was the educational debt burden of the respondents. The overwhelming majority, 77 percent, had some educational debt. The average educational debt was \$81,260. However, 5 percent had a debt burden greater than \$100,000; 22 percent had debt burdens greater than \$150,000; and 11 percent were in debt in excess of \$200,000. Not surprisingly, 43 percent aspired to pursue postsurgical fellowships; 38 percent planned on entering private practice; and only 9 percent of the respondents had aspirations of going into academic medicine.

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## Obituary: Dr. James Peoples



James Peoples

Dr. James Peoples, chair of the Wright State University School of Medicine Department of Surgery and surgery residency program director, died July 19 of injuries suffered after falling from a ladder.

A member of the Ohio Chapter, Dr. Peoples had served on the Wright State faculty since 1979. He became chair and program director in 1988 upon the retirement of Dr. Dan Elliott. Dr. Peoples oversaw the training of thousands of medical students and resident physicians. He was a supporter of the American College of Surgeons and the Ohio Chapter. He was a leader by example—a frequent presenter at chapter and ACS meetings—and he encouraged his faculty to participate and assume leadership roles within the Ohio Chapter. He was an excellent surgeon, and he will be sorely missed.

Memorial contributions may be made to the James B. Peoples, MD, Department of Surgery Fund, Wright State University School of Medicine, One Wyoming St., Ste. 7000 CHE, Dayton, OH 45409.

# Ohio Legislature Amends Statewide Trauma Statutes to Allow for Provisional Verification

by Dan Jones, President, Capitol Consulting Group, Inc., and Jay Johannigman, MD, FACS, Chair, Ohio Committee on Trauma

Over the course of just a few days of formal activity during the week of May 20, the Ohio General Assembly quickly enacted revisions to Ohio's statewide trauma system statutes. The provisions were added by the House Health Committee to an unrelated and already passed Senate bill (SB 124) on May 21, passed by the full House on May 22, and concurred by the Senate on May 23.

The dramatic action by the legislature was the culmination of intense informal, behind-the-scenes lobbying by rural hospitals and other interested parties seeking to make revisions to the trauma laws prior to their effective date of November 3, 2002. OCACS and the Ohio Chapter of the Committee on Trauma rapidly responded to become involved with these discussions in the legislature. In order to facilitate this process, OCACS has recently retained professional lobbying representation in Columbus. The chapter's leadership and lobbyists were quick to respond to the challenges associated with numerous hostile amendments circulating around the Capitol.

Central to the legislature's activity was the perceived need to address shortcomings in the current statutes regarding trauma center verification. Legal opinions recently rendered concluded that existing statutes provide no mechanism for hospitals to be granted formal verification or reverification status after the effective date this coming November. Numerous hospitals requested that the legislature institute a mechanism for provisional status as a transition into formal verification. Ultimately, provisional verification language was hammered out between hospitals, OCACS, the Ohio COT, the Ohio Departments of Health and Public Safety, and other trauma coalition members. Hospitals that have not been formally verified by the ACS Verification Review Committee may apply for provisional status after demonstrating legitimate interest and commitment in obtaining verification status. In brief, a hospital is required to apply for a consultation and/or a verification visit from the ACS, as well as to develop letters of commitment from hospital leadership and the medical executive committee. The amendment also provides a means for hospitals that fail reverification to apply for provisional status while criterion deficiencies are addressed. In the case of hospitals applying for initial verification, the time frame of provisional verification extends 18 months. For those hospitals that are addressing issues resulting from a reverification visit, the provisional designation extends 12 months. In order for hospitals to receive provisional status, other safeguards are required to assure serious intent at verification and to prevent a manipulation of the system. If a hospital fails to attain formal ACS verification by the end of the provisional time frame, it must withdraw from the process for a period of at least three years before reapplying for provisional designation.

OCACS was successful in preventing more onerous language from being added to SB 124 by rural hospitals seeking a legislative exemption(s) to the ACS Verification Review process. At issue, several rural hospitals challenged the standard of surgeon presence in the trauma bay within 15 minutes for the highest level of trauma activation. These hospitals had successfully persuaded several key legislators to support this legislative exemption. The OCACS and the Ohio COT successfully defended this standard as a cornerstone of care of the injured patient. It is likely that this issue will again emerge in the upcoming months.

OCACS's leadership has taken strong steps to strengthen its advocacy efforts in Columbus. The recent timing of the above-described activities was fortuitous. However, it is incumbent on all ACS members to assume a more active role in supporting the chapter in its education and lobbying efforts. Tort reform, malpractice insurance, Medicaid reimbursement, and trauma care will likely be a critical focus as we move forward with an aggressive advocacy agenda. ACS members will most certainly be called upon to donate time, energy and resources to support this cause. I hope you will join your Chapter in assisting with these most important endeavors.

## Welcome to New Members (January–June)

### Fellows

Steven Battaglia, Fayetteville  
Philip Bongiorro, Columbus  
John Gillen, Springfield  
Timothy Hunter, Youngstown  
Robert Levitt, Dover  
J. C. Penhos, Tiffin  
William Rachwal, Toledo  
J. Michael Smith, Cincinnati  
Paula Termuhlen, Dayton

### Associate Fellows

Linda Camp, Warren  
Peter Klein, Toledo  
Howard Lederer, Wooster  
Juan Sanabria, Toledo

### Candidates

Christian Bulcoa, Cincinnati  
Augusto Da Silva, Toledo  
Michael Fealk, Boardman  
David Giammar, Columbus  
Brian Gruber, Youngstown  
Mubeen Jafri, Cincinnati  
Christopher Kwan, Cleveland  
Thomas Lheureau, Steubenville  
Ian Lytle, Cincinnati  
Andreas Mykoniatis, Cincinnati  
Jennifer McNeill, Hudson  
Eric Roselli, Cleveland  
George Scheng, Cincinnati  
Thomas Stamp, Kettering  
Yunuen Valenzuela, Cincinnati  
Paul Wojciechowski, Cincinnati

# 47th Annual Meeting Highlights

by *Brian Jones, MD, FACS, 2002 Program Chair*

Hosted in Akron at the Crowne Plaza Quaker Square from May 9 to 11, the 47th annual meeting of the Ohio Chapter provided members, guests, and all attending several reasons to appreciate the great strength of this chapter. Potential members as well as long-standing members made their contributions, as did visitors from all around the country.

Visiting faculty from Charlotte, NC, directed a well-orchestrated hands-on workshop at the cohosting institution, Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine (NEOUCOM) at the Rootstown campus. Drs. Todd Heniford and Brent Matthews of the Carolinas Medical Center taught many of the chapter's members the science and technique of laparoscopic ventral herniorrhaphy during the Thursday workshop and enlightened the membership further with presentations on Friday.

Concurrently, many potential Fellows from residency programs across the state participated in a workshop put together by the Resident Education Committee. Additionally, many of these same residents provided an education for the chapter membership via numerous posters and presentations coordinated by Jonathan Saxe, MD, FACS, chair of the Resident Research Forum. During the course of the meeting, awards were presented in categories of basic science, clinical science, oncology, and trauma to well-deserving residents who presented excellent papers.

The Friday program began with welcoming remarks by host Governor Gary B. Williams, MD, FACS; Robert Blacklow, MD; dean and president of NEOUCOM; and Joseph P. Crowe, Jr., MD, FACS, chapter president. The general sessions provided excellent presentations on the newest in minimally invasive surgical techniques and on the management of complex benign and malignant diseases by many faculty members from our own chapter. Bookends to the Friday sessions were Senator Kevin Coughlin (R-OH) discussing malpractice and tort reform, and the presidential reception and dinner at the Akron City Club. Senator Coughlin was hosted by the Community Hospital Committee. The centerpiece to the day was the annual Ohio Oration, which featured Claude H. Organ, Jr., MD, FACS, second vice-president of the American College of Surgeons, whose captivating luncheon presentation was entitled "The Clinical Investigator: An Endangered Species?"

Saturday's program was also exciting and enlightening. The Ohio Committee on Trauma invited Eric R. Frykberg, MD, FACS, University of Florida, to speak at the annual breakfast meeting. Following his excellent presentation, "The Evaluation of Penetrating Trauma for Peripheral Vascular Injuries," several other chapter members followed with commendable presentations on trauma, critical care, and vascular surgery topics. The annual golf outing concluded the program in usual fashion (only a few drops of rain this year) at the beautiful Portage Country Club in Akron. All in all, it was a busy, engaging, and enlightening three days of activity for the chapter, utilizing the fullest of the chapter's valuable membership.



Dr. Richard Fratianne (left) accepts the Distinguished Service Award from Dr. Mark Malangoni, chair of the Distinguished Service Award Committee. Dr. Fratianne is a past president of the Ohio Chapter and a past chair of the Ohio Committee on Trauma. He has been a mentor and role model for many trauma surgeons in the state.



At the Ohio Oration luncheon, Dr. Joseph Crowe (left) accepted an appreciation award from the American College of Surgeons development program manager Fred Holzrichter. The chapter is a life member in the Fellows Leadership Society and has contributed over \$55,000 to the research and scholarship endowment funds.

## Special Thanks to Our Meeting Sponsors

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## Annual Meeting Photos



The tabletop exhibits are popular during the breaks. This year the exhibit hall also housed poster presentations by residents who participated in the annual Resident Research Forum.



Program chair Dr. Brian Jones (left) and cochair Dr. David Linz (right) listen as Dr. Charlie Stone makes a point.



Dr. Jonathan Saxe (right), chair of the Resident Research Forum, congratulates Dr. Santosh Nandi, winner of the Trauma Award.



Host Ohio governor-at-large, Dr. Gary Williams, welcomes guests to the Akron City Club and to the Quaker Square complex.



(L-R) Drs. Eric Frykberg, Sidney Miller, and William Sternfeld at the president's dinner.



Dr. John Howington, program chair for the 2003 meeting in Cincinnati.



(L-R) Drs. John and Heather Raaf enjoy a moment with Dr. Claude Organ at the president's dinner reception at the Akron City Club.

## William Sternfeld Sworn in as President-Elect of the Ohio State Medical Association



William Sternfeld

William Sternfeld, MD, FACS, Toledo, was installed as the 2002–2003 president-elect of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA) at its annual meeting May 18–20 in Columbus.

Dr. Sternfeld's accomplishments include a long involvement in organized medicine. He has served a term as both treasurer and president of the Academy of Medicine of Toledo. Dr. Sternfeld is currently serving his second term as Ohio Governor to the American College of Surgeons. As a member of the OSMA, he

served as a delegate and specialty delegate to the OSMA House of Delegates, and as Fourth District Councilor. Dr. Sternfeld has also chaired the OSMA Auditing and Appropriations Committee, and he serves on committees overseeing finances for both the American Medical Association (AMA) and the American College of Surgeons.

## Ohio Chapter, American College of Surgeons

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# Governor's Report to the Ohio Chapter

*by Ezra Steiger, MD, FACS, Senior Ohio Governor*



**Ezra Steiger**

It has been an honor and privilege for me to serve as a governor to the College, representing the Ohio Chapter, for the past six years. During

those years, there have been two changes in executive leadership of the College, and the College has been more effectively addressing the concerns of its membership. An organized lobbying effort has been started to give us a more effective voice in legislative issues.

Cooperative clinically relevant research efforts are underway. Continuing medical education continues to be an important

College endeavor, and more opportunities exist to receive CME credits. More effective weekly communication has begun via the Internet to keep the membership apprised of important issues affecting the practice of surgery. Outreach efforts are encouraging active participation of younger surgeons in the College's activities. The College has put forth much time and effort in attempts to enhance reimbursement. Over these past six years, it seems that the College has become more attuned to the concerns of its membership and has become more effective in dealing with these concerns.

It is important at the chapter level for the district councilors to bring the concerns of members in their district to the attention of the

chapter and the governors so that these issues can be addressed at the College level. Members of the Ohio Chapter should be provided the names and addresses of the district councilors and governors to provide more direct communication for subsequent action at the state or national level ([www.ohiofac.org/members/about/officers](http://www.ohiofac.org/members/about/officers)). The membership should continue to be polled yearly on issues significant to their surgical practices. The Ohio Chapter is a strong, effective chapter, and the free communication of ideas and concerns at the district and state levels will help to strengthen both the Ohio Chapter and the College.

I thank the membership and leadership of the Ohio Chapter for allowing me to serve as governor for the past six years.