



NEWSLETTER

OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FORMER PAHO/WHO STAFF MEMBERS

VOLUME III NO. 2

AUGUST 1993

EDITORIAL

One of the main goals of creating the Association of Former PAHO/WHO Staff Members (AFSM) was to reestablish the links between former staff members and the Organization, and among the former staff members themselves.

During our working years—and many hours dutifully dedicated to our work—we developed strong bonds with the Organization and with our colleagues, who also became our friends and our extended family. Yet, after departure, it is very difficult, sometimes impossible, to maintain even the frailest link with our former colleagues and with the Organization, the institution many of us consider "our home away from home".

The AFSM is trying to change this situation. First, we were able to obtain from the Organization that its internal newsletter, PAHO TODAY, be mailed to all the retirees. This newsletter informs about what PAHO is doing in the Americas and reports on special

health events that are taking place in our Region and in the rest of the world.

Second, the input from our retired colleagues is enabling us to include in the Association's Newsletter information received on the whereabouts of retirees and their activities, and at the same time, to report on any changes taking place in the Organization (see column For Your Information). The Newsletter also contains pertinent information on matters of concern to retirees, such as Mature Driving (a program for older drivers sponsored by the American Association of Retired Persons), Health Insurance, The Living Trust (the distribution of assets and assignation of responsibilities to heirs), Long-term Health Care, and New Estate and Gift Tax Provisions affecting alien residents and non-residents. The last subject is going to be presented at our General Meeting in November. A summary of the highlights will be published in our next issue of the Newsletter.

To fulfill our objectives, we need your participation. Please send us your contribution on any subject that you may think will be of interest to retirees, as well as information regarding your activities.

Without your participation, the AFSM Newsletter will not achieve its purpose. Remember, together we can make it as good and as informative as it can be. PLEASE, HELP US!

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

In the April issue of the AFSM Newsletter (Vol.III, No. 1) we referred to the information that the Association is providing in an attempt to foster the links among its fellow members, and between them and the Pan American Health Organization. It goes without saying that the situation varies in the case of each retiree: because, while some of our recently retired colleagues have participated in shaping the present structure of the Organization or, more correctly, of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, a good number of our friends in the Association retired some years ago and, like old soldiers, are fading away from the Organization.

Most, if not all the retirees, have access to official reports where the health situation in the Americas is presented and analyzed, and the accomplishments of the Organization are documented. However, most of our colleagues, particularly those living outside of the Washington Metropolitan Area, are

not familiar with the present structure of PAHO, and do not know who are "the shakers and movers" in the Organization. In this section we will attempt to present at least a "nugget" of information, which may help in maintaining the link between retirees and the Organization depending on the interest of each individual.

Since the First International Sanitary

Convention, which was held at the new Willard Hotel in Washington, DC in 1902, much water has gone under the bridge, and the Secretariat has had to make the changes to adjust to new situations and priorities established by the Governing Bodies of the Organization.

The previous structure of the Organization, valid up to the end of January 1993, included the Offices of the Director, Deputy Director,

January 1993, included the Offices of the Director, Deputy Director, and Assistant Director; the Office of Administration and two Divisions: Health Systems Infrastructure and Health Programs Development. As of 1 February 1993, there are four Technical Support Divisions and three Special Programs. These seven structural units report directly to the Office of the Director, which includes the Director and the Deputy Director.

According to Directive HQ/FO 93-01 (29 January 1993) the structural adjustments have been made to strengthen the Secretariat of the Organization in order to:

- . improve implementation of policies established by the Pan American Sanitary Conference and WHO's preliminary proposal of the 9th General Program of Work;
- . facilitate and stimulate communication and coordination of HQ units;
- . improve programming and evaluation processes at all levels;
- . improve response capability of HQ to changes in the health situation;
- . stimulate organizational development and capacity to innovate and take new initiatives within the overall context of the objectives of the Organization.

As of 1 February 1993 (HQ/FO-93-07), new appointments were made by the Director as follows:

Special Programs

Dr. Jose Roberto Ferreira, Chief,
Human Resource Development
Program (HRD)

Dr. Joao Yunes, Chief,
Maternal and Child Health and
Family Planning (HMP)

Dr. Judith K. Navarro, Chief,
Publications Program (HBI)

Technical Support Divisions

Directive No. HQ/FO 93-02 (Rev. I) dated 27 April 1993 establishes the internal organization of the Technical Support Divisions (TSD) and identifies the Program Coordinators under the TSDs. This Directive is complementary, and in certain details modifies the original HQ/FO 93-02 dated 17 March 1993, distributed in Spanish to all the staff.

Space limitations prevent us from going into all aspects of the organizational changes. However, it may be useful to some of our readers and their contacts in other institutions dealing with the health sector, to become familiar with key elements of the new Organizational Chart. In this respect, at this time

we will concentrate on the Technical Support Divisions.

. Health and Development (HPD-Director Dr. J.R. Teruel) includes

a) Health Policies (HDD-Coordinator Dr. C. Vieira)

b) Research and Technological Development in Health (HDR-Coordinator Dr. A. Pellegrini)

c) Health Situation Analysis (HDA- Coordinator Dr. P. L. Castellanos)

. Health Promotion and Protection (HPP- Director Dr. H. Restrepo)

a) Health Promotion and Social Communication (HPS-Coordinator Dr. G. Llanos)

b) Health Protection (HPR-Coordinator Dr. E. Anzola)

c) Food and Nutrition (HPN-Coordinator Dr. M. Peña, a.i.)

. Communicable Disease Prevention and Control (HPC-Director Dr. D. Brandling-Bennett)

a) Communicable Diseases (HCT- Coordinator Dr. G. Schmunis)

b) Veterinary Public Health (HCV- Coordinator Dr. P. Arambulo III)

c) AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (HCA-Coordinator Dr. F. Zacarias)

. Health Systems and Services (HSS- Director Dr. J. M. Paganini)

a) Health Systems Development (HSD- Coordinator Lic. M. A. Segovia)

b) Local Health Systems Organization and Management (HSL- Coordinator Dr. R. Capote Mir)

c) Essential Drugs and Health Care Technology (HSE-Coordinator Dr. E. Fefer)

. Health and Environment (HPE- Director Eng. H. Otterstetter)

a) Basic Sanitation (HES-Coordinator Eng. F. Zepeda)

b) Environmental Quality (HEQ- Eng. C. Cuneo)

IS RETIREMENT THE END OF THE LINE?

When I was still an **active** staff member and contemplating retirement, which was, so to speak, around the corner, I started wondering what that new development in my life would be like, since I had seen other

colleagues almost "fade away" and a few even die shortly after retirement.

The first thing I did was to make an introspective analysis of my life with PAHO throughout all those past years, and by doing so I clearly saw a distinct dichotomy: the Administration on the one hand, and the work colleagues on the other, especially those with whom I had been fortunate enough to strike a long-lasting friendship. Clearly, retirement could not mean that I had to sever all those relationships overnight nor even over the years. When I had this thought clear in my mind, retirement started to take on a new meaning.

Certainly, one who retires comes to the realization that he or she is no longer a "staff member", for this is the part that is supposed to die off at retirement. Instead, one could think of himself or herself as a "free" individual who would no longer have to follow a calendar or abide by a given schedule or deadline, nor get up at a certain time in the morning. What is more important, one could detach himself or herself from all those unpleasanties that are bound to surface in an environment where human interests interplay with one another and run, at times, into conflicting situations.

Now, going back to our long-lasting relationships, what would become of them? They came about and were nourished around the work environment. Are they destined to die off too? Clearly not, if there was something one could do about it. And what would this be? The best alternative that comes to my mind is to keep in contact with our retirees Association that, among its various goals, is committed to promote a link and facilitate communication among former staff members.

I have seen many cases where, once the employee retired, he or she no longer wanted to be involved in the life of the Organization.

Perhaps the PAHO Staff Association is not doing all it should to ease the retiring staff member through this difficult transition. Maybe both, the Staff Association and the Association of Former PAHO/WHO Staff Members, should get together and try to work out a course of action to guide the soon-to-be retiree through this transitional stage, to minimize the doubts and feelings of inadequacy and reinforce the positive aspects and benefits of retirement. We know from experience that a good number of retirees can still give invaluable assistance on a voluntary basis as has been demonstrated in

the past. This makes the person still feel useful and needed, not to mention the valuable and inexpensive resource to the Organization.

Apart from this, the Association has its own goals to accomplish, using the invaluable resources of its ever growing membership. Some of those goals have nothing to do with the Organization and are related to helping other retirees in various ways.

To conclude, would not it be worth trying to think in terms of enriching the Association's human resources and, at the same time, reaching out to our lifetime friends?

Federico G. Varela

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

The annual luncheon of the AFSM took place on Wednesday, June 16, at Alfio's restaurant in Bethesda. Twenty-nine members of the Association, some accompanied by their spouses, attended the event. There were many friendly faces we had not seen in a long time, and a great deal of laughter and good will.

The private room provided by the

restaurant and the excellent food and service enhanced the general feeling of camaraderie and well being. The featured speakers, Gloria Burdick and Stephen Dodge, made an outstanding presentation on the subject of long-term health care. Ms. Burdick had some prizes for the members, which were awarded at the end of their presentation, to the delight of those present. In summary, it was a wonderful afternoon enjoyed by all.

If you missed the luncheon, try to come to the cookout party being organized for 19 September. Watch the mail for the flyer announcing the details of this next event! **SEE YOU THERE!**

1993 GENERAL MEETING

The AFSM General Meeting will take place on 16 November and will probably feature a speaker to discuss **inheritance taxes**. The President, Treasurer, and Secretary will present their annual reports to the membership. The term of office of three directors will expire at the end of December. Elections will be held at the meeting to fill these vacancies.

NEWS FROM OUR COLLEAGUES

Samuel Koipillai

After he retired from PAHO/WHO, Koipillai used a substantial portion of the lump-sum payment he received from the Organization to establish two projects in Hosur, India: 1) a Children's Home for as many as possible abandoned and orphaned children (mostly females) and 2) a primary health care clinic in a rural area in South India, to make it easier for thousands of village people to have access to quality health care, and also to raise their awareness about preventive health measures, hygiene and nutrition.

Needless to say, the only way he has been able to continue this huge undertaking is by investing personal funds and by contributions received from friends. Both projects are still in the development stages, and for that reason he has to spend most of the year in India.

A non-profit organization, Community Uplift Project International, was created to channel all aid to these projects. Donations are exempt from U.S. income taxes.

Some members of our Association made donations in

memory of Merry Ganesh Crussiah, instead of sending flowers, when she died last year in October 11, 1992. These projects were very close to Merry's heart.

Anyone who feels moved to send a donation, no matter how small, can do so by directing it to:

CUP International
17517 Queen Elizabeth Drive
Olney, MD 20832

We wish our colleague great success in this altruistic endeavor.

LETTERS FROM OUR COLLEAGUES

Ruth M. Clark (Brevard, NC)

I enjoyed the October magazine. I am anxious to know if there are any retirees in this vicinity. I am now in a retirement complex in Brevard, NC. The College Walk is the name of the place and has lovely people from all over. If you know of anyone who would like to come here or anyone in this vicinity, I would appreciate your letting me know. I just moved here from Stowe, Vermont. I am glad to be out of the snow and ice...

Louis J. Lovelace (Escondido, CA)

It's encouraging to note that, as expected, the Newsletter continues to be regularly published and that it does provide

interesting information about former staff members and their past and present activities... I am very happy. so far, for the way our PAHO/WHO Staff Health Insurance is serving us

...

Iva R. Latortue (Port-au-Prince, Haiti)

... Bravo to Jeane Surgi for her compte-rendu of her trip to Australia and New Zealand. She managed with her spirited and keen vocabulary to make us enjoy her travel...It was a good idea to publish the addresses of former staff. I have received three letters from colleagues who were happy to get in touch. I am going through the list and I noted that although so many of us are originally from Latin American countries, many former staff members have opted to retire in the United States...Keep up the good work.

Vinetta Shuert Martin (Winter Park, FL)

... I am enjoying my new career in sunny Florida and even though the high temperatures throughout the year are not to my liking, I am sure there are plenty of folks who would love it. I keep busy helping and serving on the Board of Directors of two companies my husband and I own in this area. It certainly keeps me busy and I

thoroughly enjoy the business stimulation. As they say, it keeps you young and healthy. Thanks again for your interest in keeping up with former members...

Someswara Rao (Irwinston, N.Y.)

I wonder if the Association (AFSM) can consider issuing identification cards to its members. I believe such cards may facilitate easy passing through PAHO' security arrangements, especially for those who do not live in Washington but wish to visit the colleagues in the Office whenever they happen to be there.

PAHO issues an identification card for retirees. Write to the Chief of Personnel enclosing one picture and the date of retirement

Mario Raúl Valdes (Signal Hill, CA)

...I like to receive your Newsletter because it gives me news about colleagues and friends I have not met during my twenty plus years of WHO services in all the five continents. I would also appreciate receiving information about the terms and conditions of the *Volunteer Work Program* mentioned in your last Newsletter... Keep up the good work... It would be very convenient to all of us to report the annual changes in your membership, old and new retirees joining the Association, personal news of

interest, deaths, etc.

Associations like the AFSM in other Regions and on their membership.

In regard to volunteer work for PAHO, please write to Dr. Diana Serrano LaVertu, Chief of Personnel, Pan American Health Organization, 525 23rd Street N.W., Washington D.C. 20037, and indicate how much work are you willing to

to volunteer and in which areas. In regard to other associations, there are: AFICS (Association of Former International Civil Servants) with headquarters in New York (Room DC2-837, United Nations, New York, NY 10017) and the Association of Former WHO Staff, World Health Organization, CH-1211, Geneva, Switzerland). Thank you for your ideas and suggestions.

Once again, we urge you to send us your comments and suggestions. This is the only way the Association can grow and cater to your wishes. You don't have to sign it.

Dear Editor:

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