



**American Orthotic &
Prosthetic Association**

3rd QUARTER AOPA STAFF REPORT

To: AOPA Membership

From: Thomas F. Fise, Executive Director

Date: October 14, 2010

Subject: Major Shifts Could Alter Legislative Landscape

Dear AOPA Member:

In just a few short weeks what had been generally considered a sure Democratic win for continued control of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives has turned into a huge question mark. More and more political pundits are predicting significant gains for the Republican Party in both the House and Senate with some even seeing control of the House shifting to Republican control.

But even if nothing that dramatic occurs, there remains the strong likelihood that both bodies of Congress will be more balanced with the majority party in either House having a very thin margin. While some hope that this might force the players to jettison some of the inflammatory rhetoric and partisanship that has marked the first two years of this administration and the 111th Congress, others deem that unlikely. Small margins mean probable legislative gridlock. Significant revisions to health care reform or tax and spending policies are unlikely. Such a Congress might be expected to “kick the can down the road” and largely “mark time,” doing only the most essential functions until the 2012 Presidential elections.

What that means for O&P is very unclear but there is talk of thwarting some of the more costly provisions of the recently enacted Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act by withholding funding if Republicans gain control. Regardless, over the next two years the regulatory process at HHS/CMS will continue to churn out regulations implementing key components of a new health care payment system that will have major impacts on O&P businesses and the patients you serve.

Little, if nothing, adversely affecting O&P directly is likely when the “lame duck” session convenes later in November regardless of the election’s outcome. In fact, there may be some windows of opportunity for two of AOPA’s main objective – the parity legislation (S. 3223 and H.R. 2575) and the O&P Medicare Act Improvements (H.R. 2479) which would help reduce fraud and abuse, and possibly also for H. R. 5428, the Veterans/Amputee Bill of Rights. AOPA is still awaiting the required final dollar estimate on fraud and abuse savings from the Congressional Budget Office as to the Medicare Improvement Bill. The CBO number must precede any serious consideration of the bill or any of its provisions that might be incorporated into other legislative measures.

Orlando National Assembly Delivers the WOW as *The Place To Be*

Nearly 2,000 leaders from the world of O&P savored the delights of Orlando and the truly memorable Rosen Shingle Creek Resort as they sought out the newest in ideas, clinical techniques and business management guidance while renewing old friendships and forging new ones. Early morning general business sessions on Thursday and Friday delivered two “wow” keynote speakers with Warren Macdonald unveiling a new way of perceiving change as the first step in overcoming challenges. His story of personal achievement after a hiking accident rendered him a double amputee provided the inspiration to share his story as a lens for converting fear of change into a positive force for managing change.

Friday morning brought Bruce Tulgan, master of the generation gap and author of several books including Not Everyone Wins a Trophy, to the stage for an insightful approach to overcoming challenges in orchestrating the workplace talents of four generations. Friday morning also included a concise analysis of the new health care law’s impact on O&P by John Markus, JD. He drew on his former role as a top executive at HealthSouth, where he helped engineer the company’s recovery from headline grabbing scandals, in addition to previous corporate responsibilities with health care related companies.

WINE AUCTION – Popped the Cork for the O&P PAC

More than 40 lots of wine were auctioned at the Thursday, September 29th Wine Tasting and Auction at the National Assembly. Proceeds exceeded last year and added \$27,000 to the O&P PAC and Capitol Connection coffers. The O&P PAC provides campaign funding support to legislators sharing the O&P vision of quality patient care, parity and controlling fraud and abuse. The Capitol Connection is the education arm of AOPA’s legislative advocacy and provides educational materials and the O&P issues oriented web site, www.AOPAvotes.com.

Frank H. Bostock, MBA, CO donated the tasting wines from their family winery, Dos Cabezas Winery in Sonoita, AZ. Donating wines or cash to purchase wines for the auction were AOPA members and staff: Kel Bergmann, CPO, Devon Bernard, Frank Bostock, CPO, FAAOP, Jehan de La Brosse, Thomas DiBello, CO, FAAOP and Lesley DiBello, Kathy Dodson, Rick Fleetwood, MPA, Richard Gingras, CPO, BOCOP and Marbee Gingras, Brian Gustin, CP, Bert Harman and Debi Harman, Russell Hornfisher, Jim Kaiser, CP, Thomas Kirk, Ph.D., Al Kritter, Jr., CPO, FAAOP and Lynn Kritter, Anita Liberman-Lampear, MA and Alan Lampear, Mahesh Mansukhani, MBA, Joe McTernan, Ralph Nobbe, CPO and Sharadi Nobbe, RN, Tina Moran, John Reynolds, CPO, FAAOP, Lisa Schoonmaker, CPO, FAAOP and Scott Schoonmaker, Frank Vero, CPO, James Weber, MBA and Diane Weber and Claudia Zacharias, MBA.

Thanks to all who made it such a success, especially Anita Liberman-Lampear, Alan Lampear, Lesley DiBello, Diane Kaiser, Lynn Kritter and Debi Harman.

\$10,000 Richer – And An Exciting Finale to the Event

More support for the AOPA legislative agenda, the O&P PAC and the Capitol Connection came from the \$10,000 the Prize is Right Game Show look-a-like made possible by Branier Orthopedic Custom Molded Shoes and Arizona AFO. These companies donated the \$10,000

prize money that was won by AOPA member Robert Leaber III, CPO, Adaptive Prosthetics & Orthotics, Houma, LA. Chris Snell took home a \$500 prize and Kimberly Linton won the \$100 consolation prize. Harry Layton, CPO was runner-up. The proceeds from the raffle are especially critical for AOPA's continued support for those O&P friendly legislators and are one more positive step toward the goal of preserving the appropriate reimbursement models for continuing delivery of quality patient care.

Not just golf...A Golf Experience

Over 70 golfers participated in the 2010 Thranhardt Golf Classic and enjoyed a great day of golf with their O&P friends. The fall tournament was one of O&P's largest and most successful yet.

Two Great Causes and one great course made it not just golf, but a golf experience. For the second year in a row AOPA's Capitol Connection and OPAF joined forces to co-sponsor this great event to benefit the inspiring efforts of OPAF and the legislative, research and education efforts of the Capitol Connection to further the O&P policy agenda.

The prime location, the natural beauty of the course, the first class amenities and the fact that the tournament was held in conjunction with the AOPA National Assembly made it a great day of golf and friendship renewing.

Ideal Office of the Future Initiative Drives Home Innovation!

Expanding on last year's exhibit floor presentation of the "Office of the Future," the 2010 National Assembly "office" presentation highlighted the expanding use of technology in streamlining functions in tomorrow's patient care environment. Nineteen manufacturers donated needed equipment to furnish the "office" with the latest high-tech innovations. Volunteers took turns manning the display to answer questions from practitioners. Also available was the 15 minutes video created for last year's presentation which is still available free to members. Email www.info@aopanet.org and request "Office of the Future" video.

AOPA Board member Kel Bergmann, CPO, president Jim Kaiser, CP and immediate past president, Brian Gustin, CP invested substantial time in creating this visual model for inspiring AOPA members to be thinking about their own "office" of the future. Products in the display were donated by these companies: ACOR, Becker Orthopedic, BIONESS Inc., BioSculptor Corp., Brightree LLC, Endolite, Fillauer Companies, Futura International, Freedom Innovations LLC, Gaitrite, MICA, Ohio Willow Wood, OPIE Software/oandp.com, Orthomerica, OSSUR Americas Inc., Otto Bock Consulting & Equipping, SPS, Tamarack Habilitation Technologies and Touch Bionics.

A New AOPA Tradition Is Born In Business Education

The inaugural Sam E. Hamontree, CP, Business Lecture Award series held right after the Friday morning Annual Business Meeting set a high bar for future winners. This year's winner, Brian Gustin, CP, outlined his vision of how the future O&P patient care facility must make more efficient use of various skill sets to compete and deliver quality patient care. After November 1st, many National Assembly presentations will be available at

www.aopanetonline.org/education and those videos with a “quiz” link may qualify for CE credits.

Members of the Hamontree family – Sam’s wife, Marlene, and their sons and their wives, Lynne and Steve Hamontree, CPO, and Joelle and Michael Hamontree made the series possible through a generous gift which provides the \$1,000 financial stipend for the winner.

This Hamontree business lecture series is modeled after the highly regarded Thranhardt Lecture Series. The 2010 presentations by Thranhardt winners, Maria Gerschutz, Ph.D. and Andreas Kannenberg, M.D., Ph.D. were delivered as part of the Thursday morning general session.

Lifetime Achievement Award to Ivan R. Sabel, CPO

Marking a career of one notable milestone after another, AOPA bestowed its 2010 Lifetime Achievement Award on Ivan R. Sabel, CPO, former chief executive officer of the Hanger Orthopedic Group and now non-executive chairman of the board and president of the Hanger Ivan R. Sabel Foundation. Sam Hamontree, CP paid a special tribute emphasizing the visionary qualities Mr. Sabel brought to the O&P field in his shaping of the present Hanger Orthopedic Group. A brief video captured some of the humanitarian activities fostered by the Foundation. The Hanger Orthopedic Group now consists of nearly 700 patient care facilities, Linkia Network Management, Innovative Neurotronics and the distribution arm, SPS. AOPA president, James A. Kaiser, CP, presented the award.

Legislative Advocacy Award to Rick Fleetwood, MPA

AOPA Board Member and chairman of the O&P Political Action Committee, Rick Fleetwood, was tapped for the Ralph R. “Ronney” Snell AOPA Legislative Advocacy Award presented as part of the Thursday morning General Session program. Prodigious fundraising on behalf of many Arkansas political candidates and generous personal donations to legislators at the national level friendly to O&P patient care issues were just part of the notable accomplishments meriting the award. More than three decades at Snell Prosthetic & Orthotic Laboratory and tireless service to the community were cited when *AY Magazine* named him one of the 12 most powerful men in Arkansas for his philanthropic contributions. He currently serves on the boards of the United Cerebral Palsy of Arkansas, Easter Seals Arkansas, CARTI and the UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute Gala.

Free Ad Reproduction Posters Available to AOPA Members

AOPA print ads appearing in several national news magazines have been reproduced into attractive 22” x 28” posters that can be displayed in O&P office reception areas. The messages are bound to resonate with patients. The ads present multiple reasons on why O&P benefits must be on a par with other surgical and medical benefits. The ads are thoughtful, provoking and perhaps even “edgy.” Two ads were especially designed as templates for advocacy ads that can be easily adapted to the “cutting Medicaid” issues cropping up in several states legislatures. Arizona has already passed a serious limitation on O&P Medicaid benefits and other states are threatening action.

See the posters on line by going to AOPA's home page – www.AOPAnet.org and click on the Press Room menu tab and select posters. They are free by indicating selection and quantity and directing your request to info@AOPAnet.org.

AOPA Annual Business Meeting Elects New AOPA Officers and Directors

Thomas V. DiBello, CO, FAAOP, as president-elect, automatically becomes president of AOPA succeeding James A. Kaiser, CP who becomes immediate past president when AOPA begins its new fiscal year December 1st. Bert Harman becomes president-elect and Tom Kirk, Ph.D., was elected vice president. James Weber, MBA was elected to his first two year term as Treasurer after completing the remainder of Mark Emery's term. Brian Gustin, CP, immediate past president, Lisa Schoonmaker, CPO, FAAOP and John R. Reynolds, CPO were presented with certificates commemorating their years of service as they leave the Board.

Eileen Levis was elected as Director, 1-3 facility members; Mike Hamontree was elected to a Director-at-Large seat and Kel Bergmann, CPO was reelected to his second three year term as Director, 11-199 facilities.

AOPA Veteran's Affairs Committee Meets with VA Officials

AOPA's VA Committee met with Veterans Health Administration's Joe Miller, Ph.D., CP, Deputy Clinical Prosthetics Officer and National Clinical Director, Orthotic and Prosthetic Services. The discussion was wide ranging, including a recommendation by the committee for the use of "smart cards" for VA patients. Unlike the current credit cards issued by the VA, these cards would also be able to determine if specific benefits are covered and would access prior paid claims history to avoid duplicate payments. Also discussed were the VA database and its reporting capabilities, the problem of clinic access for private O&P facilities and whether O&P facilities need an FFS number in order to provide services to veterans. Mr. Miller also expressed his concern regarding the difficulty in obtaining new codes and fees from CMS. It was agreed that maintaining good communication was vital and that the regional nature of the contracts was problematic, but probably would not change in the foreseeable future.

Center for O&P Learning Meets at National Assembly

The O&P research agenda got top billing at the October 2nd meeting of the Center for O&P Learning's Board of Directors during the National Assembly with a progress report on the pilot research RFP's now underway and a review of the dynamic response prosthetic foot comparative effectiveness RFP issued in August.

The Center's initial Board members were designated by eight O&P organizations including the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists, American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics, Amputee Coalition of America, American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association, Board of Certification/Accreditation International, National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics & Prosthetics, National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education and the Orthotic and Prosthetic Assistance Fund.

Three new members recently joined the Board adding some diverse expertise and experience. Brigadier General Michael J. Kussman, MD (ret) was most recently Department of Veterans Affairs Under Secretary for Health until his retirement in May of this year. Another retired military leader who joined the Board, MG John S. Parker, MD, MG (ret) formerly served as Commanding General of the U. S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command and now serves as a senior vice president at Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC). James Peter Beck, MD., adjunct professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Utah School of Medicine Bone and Joint Research Lab with strong expertise in osseointegration, is the third distinguished addition to the COPL Board.

AOPA Manufacturers' Foot Project Report Submitted to CMS

AOPA announced during its recent National Assembly in Orlando that its Prosthetic Foot Manufacturers' Report has been completed and sent to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This report, which has been in the works for several years, memorializes the work of a large group of prosthetic foot manufacturers in developing tests to document the presence of various features of prosthetic feet. Begun in conjunction with a request from the SADMER in 2007, this report identifies 10 tests that can be used to determine if a foot has certain features and therefore, how it should be coded. The purpose of this report was not to determine the clinical value of any foot or feature, but merely to set some guidelines to allow for accurate coding, which is verifiable as to definition and characteristics of specific features. In addition to providing this report to CMS, AOPA is setting up a meeting with the appropriate CMS regulatory officials in the hope that CMS will ultimately adopt these coding guidelines in the future. Until CMS announces action on the **AOPA** Foot Report, these guidelines are only suggestions and are not mandatory, nor are they approved by CMS. To view the report, go to: http://www.AOPAnet.org/prosthetic_foot_project.pdf

Membership Renewal Invoices Slated for October 30th Mailing

As AOPA members and the O&P field enter another year of uncertainty and special challenges from some of the still unclear provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPAC) – government officials will be writing the all important regulations that implement the act. Nothing will be more important in the coming year than for AOPA to be part of that process with the talent and expertise to make sure nothing bad happens to O&P.

A key objective is to make sure the Secretary of Health and Human Resources spells out that orthotic and prosthetic care indeed was intended to be included in the definition of “rehabilitative and habilitative services.” Senator Harkin (D-IA), a ranking member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, has indicated his own commitment to making sure the definition includes specific reference to O&P.

Your membership renewal will make sure that AOPA has a seat at the table to help preserve your ability to continue delivering quality patient care. The real challenge will be in making sure regulators understand the unique renewing nature of O&P services and why timely

investments in O&P patient care can save Medicare, Medicaid and insurers valuable dollars over the long term.

New For 2011....AOPA members may choose to pay their dues using the paper invoice or the new online news payment module. Directions will be included with the renewal invoice.

What follows in this report are even more reasons for continuing your AOPA support.

AOPA Develops Position Paper on Medical Device Excise Tax Issue

When the health care reform bill was enacted earlier this year, one of the more troublesome provisions, to the average O&P company, is the medical device excise tax. This provision, which had originally been written to exempt devices assigned by FDA to Class I (applicable to most O&P devices), was re-written to apply a 2.3% federal excise tax to all devices, regardless of FDA class, beginning in 2013.

AOPA has been very anxious to meet with officials from the U.S. Department of Treasury, which is assigned the task of writing the regulations to implement this new tax. After a thorough analysis of the statute by AOPA's counsel at Alston & Bird, AOPA believes there are strong grounds for our argument that there are applicable exemptions which keep this tax from being applicable to either: (1) the traditional manufacturer/suppliers, who manufacture and sell components, but not the finished device; or (2) patient care facility members because they sell final custom devices to patients/consumer at retail, for use by a specific individual patient. In regard to any argument that tax should be paid at the patient care facilities level, there is strong precedent in the fact that FDA, in the 35 years since it started to regulate medical devices, has never considered patient care facilities to be "manufacturers" under the law. We believe there is a strong similarity between the status of O&P facilities and traditional dental offices, where final fitting, fabrication and refinements to the device are carried out, but only in the context of the specific needs of individual patients who are being treated.

The new AOPA Position Paper on the Medical Device Excise Tax remains in draft form. The Department of Treasury has thus far declined to meet with interested parties about this, claiming they need time for fully understand the provisions. Once the Department of Treasury starts taking input, AOPA expects to pursue that visit, and deliver the final position paper.

If you would like to review the AOPA Medical Device Excise Tax position paper (and provide your input/suggestions), please contact the AOPA Headquarters, and we will forward you a copy.

Changes to Medicare Therapeutic Shoe Medical Policy

The Medicare therapeutic shoe policy has been formally updated to reflect several changes made through a MedLearn Matters bulletin effective July 1, 2010. Specifically, the policy article has memorialized the requirement that suppliers must personally evaluate the patient prior to them selecting a pair of shoes and also must fit the shoes in person to ensure an appropriate fit.

The policy article also includes a new requirement, effective January 1, 2011, that the certifying physician must document the nature of the qualifying criteria in the patient's medical record within 6 months prior to delivery of the shoes. If he does not have this information in his own visit notes, he must obtain it from the medical records of an in-person visit with a podiatrist, other M.D. or D.O., physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist. He must then initial/sign, and date it (prior to or on the same day as signing the certification statement) and indicate agreement with this information that documents one or more of the criteria that supports the need for therapeutic shoes. .

AOPA has requested a meeting with CMS staff to make them aware of the serious difficulty with obtaining medical records from certifying physicians and to propose alternative measures that are more feasible for practitioners yet at the same time meet Medicare's needs to combat fraud and abuse. The Pedorthic Footwear Association and the American Association of Diabetes Educators are participating with AOPA in this request.

PECOS

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has finally given the field a specific date after which non-compliant claims will be rejected. As of January 3, 2011, claims for services based upon referrals from "ineligible" physicians (those not in PECOS, the Provider Enrollment, Chain Ownership System) will be denied. However, CMS has stated that since the system keys on the date the claim is received, rather than the date of service, denied claims can be resubmitted once the referring physician is in PECOS. They will not be rejected just because the physician entered PECOS after the DOS.

Further Medicare Supplier Standards Explanations

On August 27, CMS published regulations that further explain the requirements for existing Supplier Standards and add four new standards, for a total of 30. Some of the highlights of the updated or new standards, which become effective on September 27, are:

- In licensure states, a requirement that orthotists and prosthetists must be licensed and be employees of the supplier, except in states where licensure law allows for the use of contractors to provide licensed services.
- A prohibition on direct solicitation of patients, including but not limited to contacts by phone, computer, email, instant messaging, and in person.
- A requirement that the suppliers have at least 200 square feet of space, but there is an exception for state-licensed orthotic and prosthetic personnel in private practice.
- A requirement that offices be staffed and accessible during posted hours of operation, as well as have a visible sign and posted hours.
- A requirement that each office have space for record storage, unless the records are stored in a centralized location for a multi-site facility.
- A prohibition on the use of cellular phones, beepers or pagers as the primary business phone. Calls may not be exclusively forwarded from the primary business phone to cell phones, beepers or pagers, and answering machines and fax

machines may not be used exclusively as the primary business phone during posted business hours.

- A prohibition on directly contacting a patient, based upon a request from the referring physician, unless that physician has told the patient that a supplier will be contacting them.
- A requirement that ordering and referring documentation be maintained for 7 years from the date of service.
- A requirement prohibiting the sharing of office space with any other supplier or provider.
- A requirement that suppliers be open at least 30 hours a week, with the exception of suppliers working with custom made orthotics and prosthetics.

There are still a number of questions regarding the implementation of the new supplier standards and AOPA is working with CMS to obtain further clarification to determine the exact impact on the field. You can find a listing of the standards on the AOPA website at www.AOPAnet.org under “Coding & Reimbursement.” Click on “Medicare Supplier and Quality Standards.”

AOPAversity Expands Learning Opportunities

(To sign up for any of these educational offerings, contact Ann Davis at adavis@aopanet.org.)

Mastering Medicare: Advanced Coding and Billing Techniques Seminar

AOPA has presented the Advanced Coding and Billing Techniques Seminar twice in 2010 with a third seminar scheduled for October 14-15 in Las Vegas. The popularity of the Advanced Coding and Billing Seminar continues to grow and will be presented three times during 2011.

Mastering Medicare: Basic Coding and Billing Techniques Webcasts

The Mastering Medicare Webcast Series, consisting of 9 hour-long modules, covers the basics of Medicare billing that will prove educational not only to new billing staff and practitioners, but also to those who simply want to brush up on their knowledge of correct billing procedures. Staying current on Medicare rules and regulations is especially important in light of the stepped up RAC audits being carried out around the country. These educational sessions may be purchased a la carte or as a series for a discount and may be downloaded and viewed from www.AOPAnet.org as an “On Demand” educational resource. Each module has been approved for 1.5 continuing education credits by the American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics, and Pedorthics.

NEW PROGRAM! AOPA Practice Management Webcast Series

AOPA is pleased to announce that the first three modules of the new AOPA Practice Management webcast series are now available for purchase. The AOPA

Practice Management Webcast series focuses on education regarding sound business practices and office management. Currently available modules cover:

- The creation of a new O&P business
- The acquisition of an existing O&P business and
- Enrolling in Medicare and Medicaid

Additional modules will be added as they are completed. Some upcoming topics include developing an effective compliance plan, documentation techniques and how to grow your business.

AOPA Mastering Medicare Audio Conferences

AOPA continues to produce its monthly Mastering Medicare Audio Conference series. These one hour, interactive sessions provide AOPA with the opportunity to communicate important information about current issues affecting the AOPA membership.

Upcoming audio conferences (1:00 -2:00 Eastern Time):

Oct. 13	You're Going To Pay Me WHAT? Hints on Managed Care Contracting
Nov. 10	The Ins and Outs of Billing in a Part A Setting: Hospital, SNF and Hospice
Dec. 8	2011 New Codes and Medical Policies

O&P PAC

As of October 5, 2010 the O&P PAC has raised \$75,000.

The O&P PAC has contributed to the following campaigns in 2010:

• Congressman Jason Altmire (D-PA),	• Congressman Bill Cassidy (R-LA)
• Congressman Glenn Thompson, Jr. (R-PA)	• Congressman Henry Waxman (D-CA)
• Congressman Dave Camp (R-MI)	• Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD)
• Congressman Brett Guthrie (R-KY)	• Congressman Pete Stark (D-CA)
• Congressman Joe Sestak (D-PA)	• Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO)
• Senator Scott Brown (R-MA)	• Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)
• Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA)	• Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-AR)
• Senator Richard Burr (R-NC)	

AOPA Operating Performance Report Shows Stability

One hundred and forty companies, representing 1,013 full-time facilities and 78 part time facilities responded to the 2010 Operating Performance survey based on 2009 data. The tabulated results show that O&P patient care facilities dodged the deep recession reporting 10.3 percent net profit before taxes and a 4.9 percent sales increase over the prior year.

The 2009 return on assets recovered dramatically to their highest point in several years to 26.1 percent compared to 16.4 percent in 2005; 24.2 percent in 2006; 22.9 percent in 2007 and 15.6 percent in 2008. Sales growth in 2009 at 4.9 percent over the prior year compared to 7.2 percent in 2007; 5.4 percent in 2006 and 4.2 percent in 2008.

These are just a few of the facts and figures contained in the 2010 Report that should whet the appetite of any O&P facility owner or manager. Order today at the \$85 member price for the electronic version or \$185 for hard copy from the AOPA Bookstore at www.AOPAnet.org.

From the AOPA National Assembly...A Time to Remember

Each year, at the AOPA Annual Business Meeting, we recognize and remember fondly members who are no longer with us, as they have passed on since the last AOPA meeting. In this respect, the 2009-10 year was not kind to AOPA. Many at the business meeting were struck by what seemed to be a disproportionately large number of AOPA members who died over this period. We commemorated each and every one of these folks with a moment of silence at the meeting, and we have listed all of them below so that all of our members can reflect upon and acknowledge the many contributions these folks made to AOPA, their patients, and to the O&P field

<i>Todd Anderson, CP, FAAOP</i> <i>Dana A. Baptista, CP</i> <i>Raymond G. Brown, COF</i> <i>William J. Brunner, CP(E)</i> <i>Michael A. Campbell, CO</i> <i>Fern Carness, CFm, CMF</i> <i>David A. Crayne, CP(E)</i> <i>Charles L. Dale, Sr., CO</i> <i>Robert C. Deno, CO</i> <i>Pansy C. Dorling, CMF</i> <i>Tracey L. Enfinger, CFm</i> <i>Rick V. Fahnhorst, CPed</i> <i>Donald O. Fedder, DrPH, MPH, BSP,</i> <i>FAPhA</i> <i>Chris E. Groff, CFm</i> <i>Thomas H. Hawken, COF</i>	<i>Susan J. Ihlenfeldt, CO</i> <i>Walter Jackson, CTO</i> <i>Stephen J. Johnson, COF</i> <i>Raymond Marx, CPO</i> <i>Ben B. Moss</i> <i>Paul V. Murka, CPO, FAAOP</i> <i>Kevin O'Hagan, CP</i> <i>Arnet Pentland, CPO</i> <i>John Pfeiffer, CO</i> <i>Daniel G. Rowe, CPO</i> <i>David C. Schultz, CPO(E)</i> <i>Charles Smatlak, CTO</i> <i>Kim Storms, CFo</i> <i>Steven C. Thomsen, CP(E)</i> <i>Gerald A. Tindall, CPO(E), FAAOP</i>
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The death of any one of these members is a keen loss and a hardship. Special attention was called, in several different corners of the AOPA National Assembly, to the untimely passing, in the prime of life, of one of the most active and beloved individuals in the O&P field, Mr. Todd Anderson, CP, FAAOP. Todd spent much of his career as an employee of Otto Bock. He was nominated by AOPA to serve on the ABC Board, and served on that Board for three years and most recently was acting Secretary/Treasurer. He had over the past year also served as a member of the O&P Alliance Steering Committee. Todd's colleague, Andreas Kannenberg, MD., Ph.D, dedicated his award-winning Tranhardt Lecture to Mr. Anderson. ABC distributed a lapel pin, depicted below, in his memory.



All of these losses, 30 in sum, all significant contributors to the O&P field, prompt our sadness, but also instill the awareness of our finite nature and underscore the need for each of us to view each day as a gift, and to dedicate our daily efforts to raise family, friends and patients, and to leave each segment of our lives better for our presence.

And Finally a Big Thanks To All of You

There's something very special about working in a field that delivers so many positives to patients and those we work with over the years. Your staff is doubly appreciative of the loyal support, the willing volunteers, the leadership in our governance and the high regard in which so many of you hold AOPA. We strive to earn that respect from you every day and in every act of service. Last year 94 percent of our members renewed their membership and that includes retirements, business closings and mergers and acquisitions. Most associations rarely achieve an 85 percent renewal so again, there is something very special about AOPA members.

Thank you from all of us for the opportunity to serve you. We're trying to do our best for you so please look for the Member Survey you'll receive in early December which will repeat many of the questions in the 2007 survey so we can benchmark our progress.

Sincerely,



Thomas F. Fise,
Executive Director