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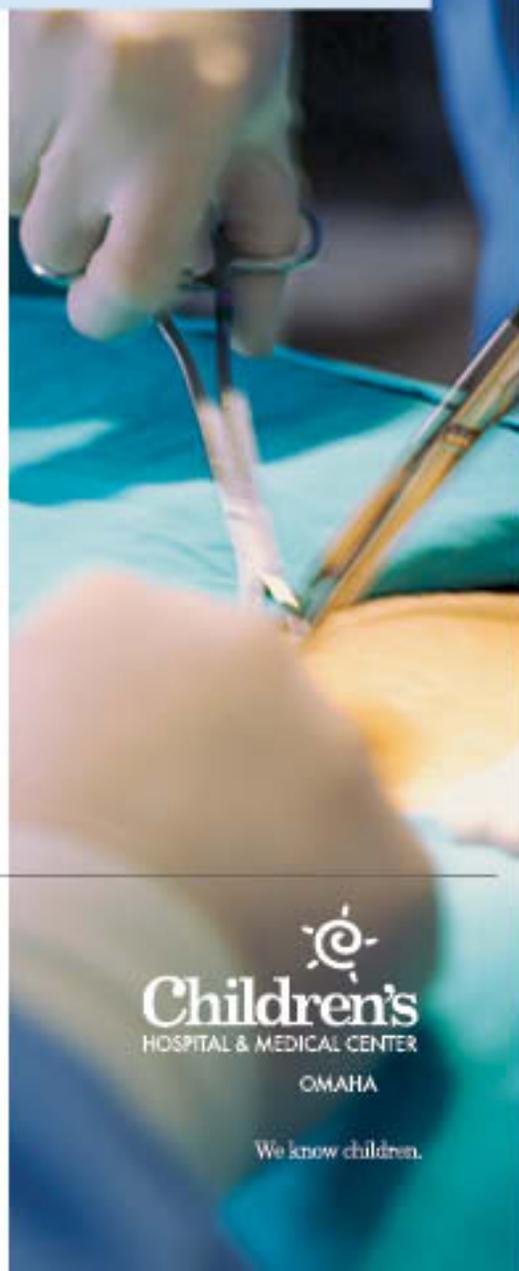


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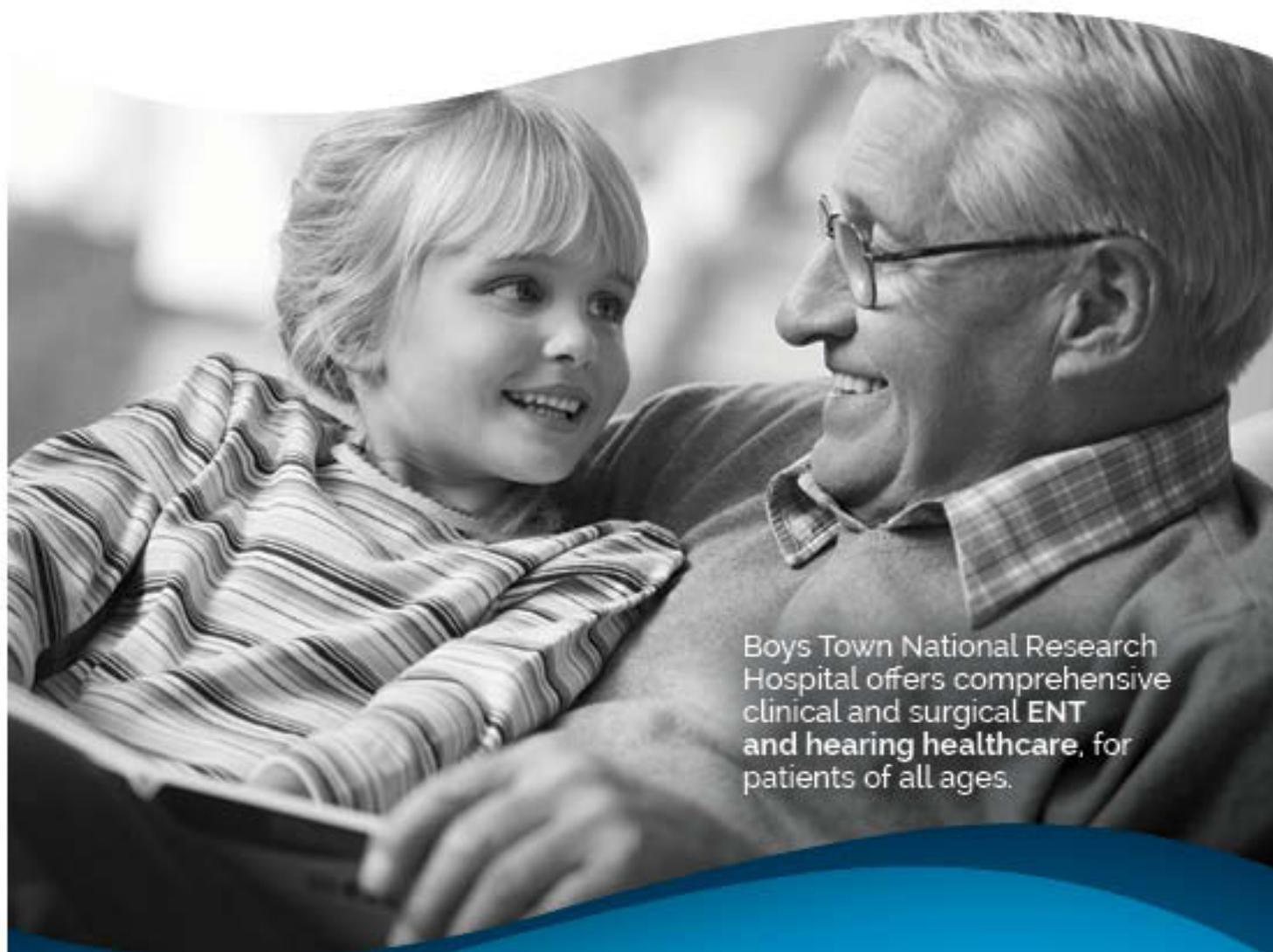


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# Physicians Bulletin

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A Publication of the

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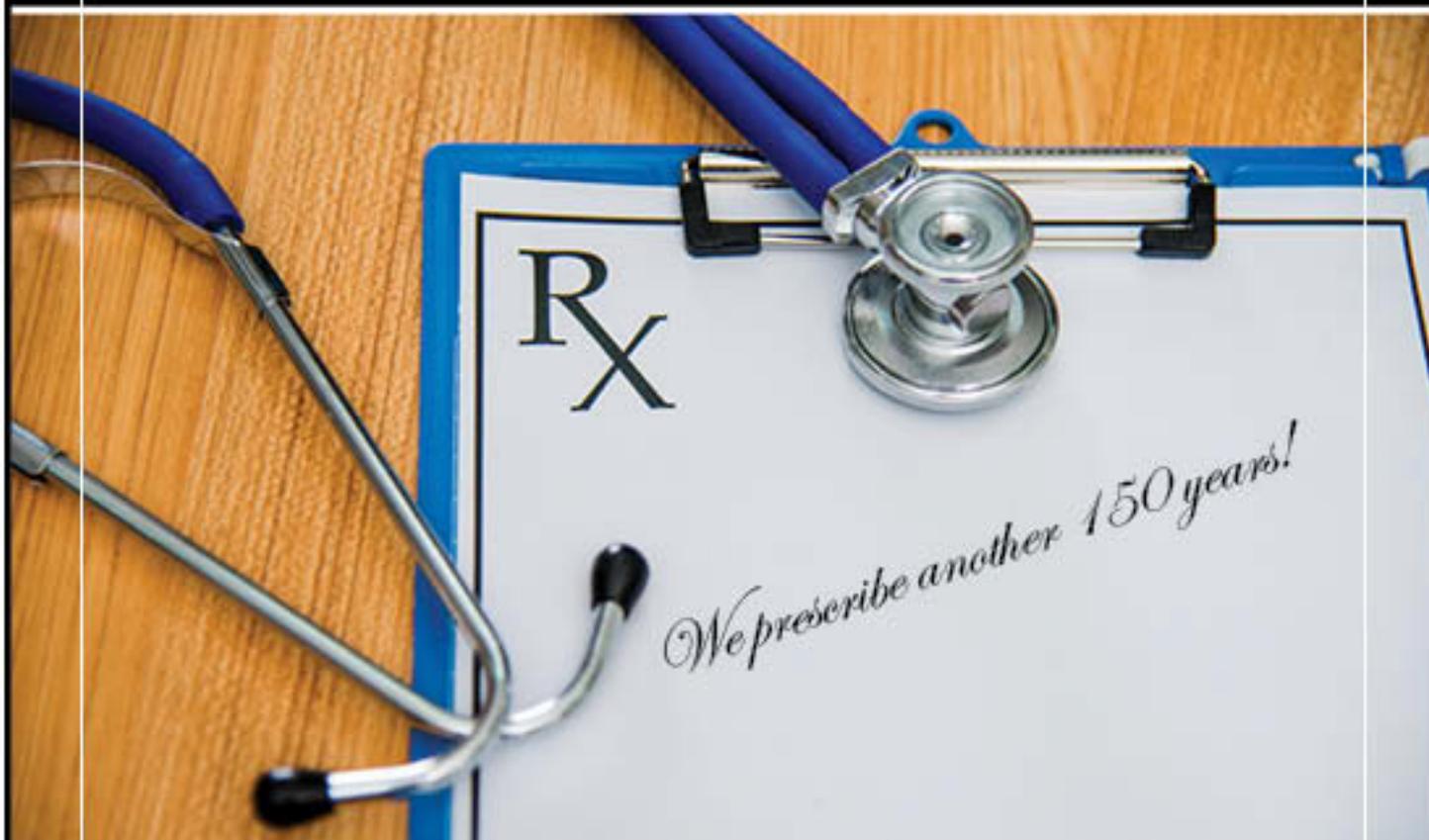


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## *A Heartfelt Thank You To All*

One-hundred and fifty years ago, Omaha, Nebraska, and the United States were still taking shape. The country was just recovering from the Civil War and Nebraska was a year away from becoming a state. Pioneer author, Willa Cather, would not be born until the next decade. And in the city of Omaha with a population of approximately 6,000 people, thirteen physicians would begin meeting to determine fair prices to charge for services. With prices like \$20 for childbirth, \$1 to \$3 for an office visit, and a commitment to serving patients, the Metro Omaha Medical Society was born.

As a team of historians, staff members and enthusiastic doctors delved into the creation of this special 150th anniversary edition of the Physicians Bulletin, it became clear: We have a rich history of achievement in the world of medicine and in our contributions to Omaha's health. But what time has also shown us is passion for patient care remains at the heart of what physicians are all about. We celebrate all that is part of our legacy, a landmark age that few organizations can boast. And we would be remiss without thanking (list names) for all of their time and talent in making this edition a reality.

### *A heartfelt thank you to the following individuals and organizations who helped make this issue possible:*

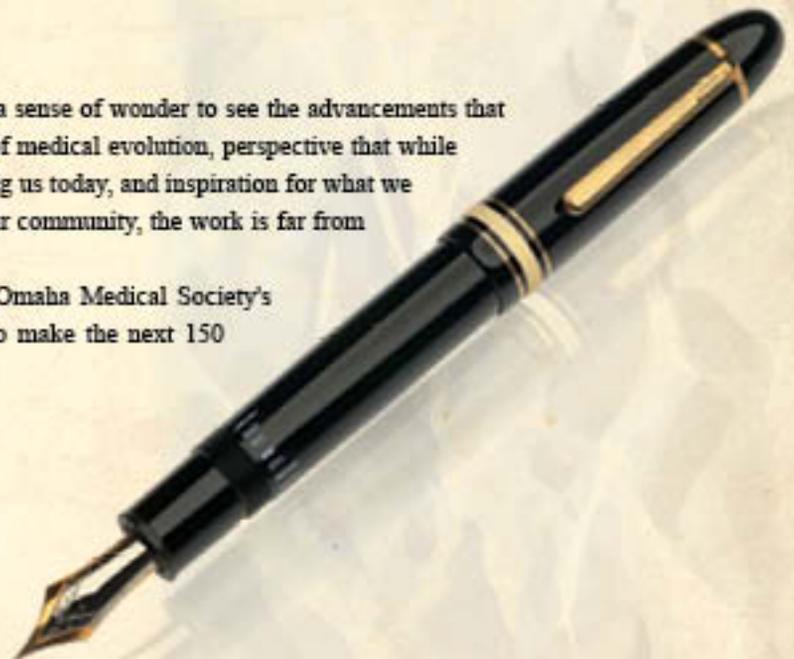
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Roger Kobayashi, M.D.  
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Kevin Warneke, Ph.D., Writer, Physicians Bulletin.

As you read these pages, we hope it brings you a sense of wonder to see the advancements that have been made, smiles at the bumps in the road of medical evolution, perspective that while much is different, there are still similar issues facing us today, and inspiration for what we can do going forward. In the arena of caring for our community, the work is far from done.

It is with great pride that we mark the Metro Omaha Medical Society's sesquicentennial with the renewed commitment to make the next 150 years just as impactful. 



# 150 YEARS MAKING AN IMPACT FOR THE 'GOOD OF THEIR CAUSE'



Pioneers of the Omaha Douglas County Medical Society. Back row: Drs. Guscoaden, Arthur, Banister, McClanahan, Holovetzhner, Jones, Lord, Gifford, Bridges and Vance. Front row: Drs. Torrie, Leup, Newman, Lanyon, Somers, Gibbs, Clark and Ross. Photo taken at the University Club September 29, 1925 from the Bostwick-Frohman/KMGTV collection at The Durham Museum.

**W**HEN A SMALL GROUP of physicians organize for the good of their cause, they can make a positive impact on their community. This was true with the Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society.”

Mary Seeley penned these words in her doctoral thesis as she chronicled the history of the Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society – the precursor to the Metro Omaha Medical Society.

As the Metro Omaha Medical Society (MOMS) celebrates its 150th anniversary, its members look back and pay homage to the physicians who stepped up to form Omaha’s medical society.

Realizing the need to establish regulation for medical practice, Omaha physicians met on June 14, 1866, and formed the Omaha Medical Society. The founding members included Dr. Augustus Roeder, Dr. I.N. Rippey, Dr. James H. Peabody, Dr. C.H. Pinney, Dr. Richard C. Moore, Dr. Samuel D. Mercer, Dr. L.F. Babcock, Dr. J.R. Conkling, Dr. James P. Peck, Dr. William McClelland, Dr. E.H. Den, Dr. Enos Lowe, and Dr. G.C. Monell. The first officers were chosen Nov. 12, 1866: President, Dr. Peck; vice-president, Dr. Roeder;

secretary, Dr. Rippey, and treasurer, Dr. Peabody. According to “History of the City of Omaha Nebraska and South Omaha” by James W. Savage, John T. Bell and Consul W. Butterfield, the following preamble and resolution was adopted:

“WHEREAS, the regular practitioners of medicine in the City of Omaha, Nebraska, feel the importance of some organization for the advancement and promotion of medical science, as well as for the mutual protection and welfare of its members; be it

Resolved, that we the undersigned, do agree to form among ourselves (and the regular practitioners of medicine who may from time to time be admitted) an association to be known as the Omaha Medical Society, of Omaha.”

On Aug. 1 of that year, members drafted a constitution and formed four permanent committees: Library, Intelligence, Meteorology and Diseases. The focus of the Meteorology committee was to explore any connections between barometric variations and rainfall and disease. According to meeting minutes, the Smithsonian Institute promised to send a rain gauge, which never was received.

A month later the society would adopt a comprehensive fee bill, which sought to bind the profession together and, as one member stated, “really established the basis for pay in those days, and was accepted by both regular and irregular physicians.” Seeley’s thesis didn’t define irregular physicians. This fee bill would be revised again in 1871 (sample provided on page 11).

Among its activities during its first 15 years were:

- An attempt to secure the body of a man sentenced to death to examine the corpse for the effects of the hanging. A Catholic priest objected on behalf of the deceased.
- Its support of a petition by the Nebraska State Medical Association, which called for a state board of health.
- A committee was appointed to confer with the city council and a law was passed requiring the maintenance of vital statistics.

As time passed, the Omaha Medical Society membership declined and “personal animosities” led to declining participation at meetings with the last meeting reaching a quorum held in July 1881. Attempts to revive the organization floundered and two rival societies formed – the Omaha Academy of Medicine and the Omaha Medical Club.



◀ continued from page 11



There are many examples in the medical society's history of families with multiple generations of physicians involved as members. Dr. E. O. Sage (photographed Jan. 17, 1913) served several years as secretary/treasurer - leading the way for his son Dr. John Sage who went on to become president in 1991 and founded the Nebraska Credentials Verification Organization.

On June 7, 1926, a special meeting of the Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society was held. Representatives from luncheon clubs, the Chamber of Commerce, the Taxpayers Research Council, social workers and all interested guests were invited to consider the needs of the county hospital. That night the medical society went on record as adopting a plan for separation of the hospital and poor farm, and for the construction of a modern six-unit hospital.

Physicians were being sent to every noon and evening meeting possible to "tell the world just how little Douglas County . . . (seemed) to think of its sick and afflicted." Soon various pledges of aid were coming to the Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society in support of its fight for the new hospital. On Nov. 6, citizens approved the bonds for the two new wings for Douglas County

Hospital. It was a "red-letter" day indeed for the Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society. Regarding the victory, Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Earl Sage said, "It showed that the medical profession could instigate and sponsor a civic movement and carry it through to successful completion. Many physicians were involved in the project and credit should be given to them."

"IT SHOWED THAT THE MEDICAL PROFESSION COULD INSTIGATE AND SPONSOR A CIVIC MOVEMENT AND CARRY IT THROUGH TO SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION. MANY PHYSICIANS WERE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT AND CREDIT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THEM."

In 1927, a group of physician spouses began organizing for the purpose of socializing and interacting with others who had similar concerns unique to medical families. This group evolved over the years into a formidable volunteer organization focused on community health concerns and became the Metro Omaha Medical Society Alliance (MOMSA). Beginning in 1983, MOMSA began hosting an annual Kitchen Tour to fund its health-related activities raising well over \$125,000. For more than 85 years, the group advocated for public health before declining membership led its dissolution in 2013.

With the Great Depression of the early 1930s, the society's attention turned to medical economics. For example, a proposal to the society in 1932 called for budget medical services to be applied to families whose annual income was under \$2,700. Needed medical or surgical treatment would be paid at the rate of 3 percent of the family income. The proposal was rejected.

Years later, the society tackled the issue of improper pasteurization of milk. A new code increased the classification from three to six grades of milk.

The next step was to conduct an advertising campaign to explain the high standards of production for certified milk. In thanking the society for its support and assistance in securing passage of the Milk Control Act, the city health commission described the accomplishment as the "greatest step forward in public health in this vicinity in the past twenty-five years."

As the United States faced world war, the society called for the appointment of a civilian defense committee to devise a plan of action for coordinating hospital, personnel and facilities for the need for care that could arise because of war. For convenience in dispatching medical care, the city was divided into eight zones, which each zone included one or more hospitals.

In 1949, the society achieved a 25-year goal with the passage of legislation that consolidated the city and county health departments. Five years later, the society aired "Your Doctor and You" television program that featured 13 episodes. Topics included growing old, childhood diseases and first aid. In 1955, the society, along with the Junior Chamber of Commerce, sponsored the first Health Fair in Omaha. Two years later, the society conducted an extensive education program, called "Operation Knockout," which called for all people under 50 to be inoculated against polio.

## MOMS Leadership\*

	Title	Start	End
Marianna Gardner Matthews	Executive Secretary	**	1990
Patricia Sheehan	Executive Director	1962	1990
Sandy Johnson	Executive Director	1990	2000
Robin Kammandel	Executive Director	2000	2004
Candy Puren	Executive Director	2004	2006
Jeri Winkelmann	Executive Director	2006	2008
Cindy Hamilton	Executive Director	2008	2011
Diane Parsons	Executive Director	2011	2013
Carol Wang	Executive Director	2013	Present

\* Information prior to what is shown was unavailable \*\* Start date could not be confirmed



Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society Executive Director Patricia Sheehan (left) and staff member Mary Ann Matthews. Photo 1962 from the Omaha World-Herald/John Savage collection at The Durham Museum.

Seeley's thesis notes that the society recognized Dr. Albert Sabin, who developed the live-virus oral polio vaccine, with a plaque of appreciation during his visit to Omaha in 1962. Issues of note in the 1960s were food sanitation, the aged and substandard housing.

Name changes would occur during the 1970s. In 1976, the Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society changed its name to the Greater Omaha Medical Society, which became the Metropolitan Omaha Medical Society in 1979. Three years later, MOMS merged with the Sarpy County Medical Society.

Among its accomplishments and notable impacts on medicine and the community health in the next several decades were:

- **1976:** passage of the Nebraska Hospital-Medical Liability Act, a comprehensive bill that defined the liability of hospitals and physicians in Nebraska (See Dr. Zetterman's account on page 33).
- **1981:** The Metro Omaha Medical Society Foundation was formed in 1981 when Dr. Charles Bressman was president of the Metro Omaha Medical Society. After Dr. Bressman's death in 1994, the Foundation received a gift of \$5,000 from the Bressman Family to help fund the community goals of this program. Since then, physicians have had the opportunity to donate to the Foundation along with their dues. Foundation funds have grown over the



MOMS Fall Meeting 1980: (Left to Right) Marilu Chin, Jean Urpenbeck and Patricia Sheehan (who served as MOMS Executive Director from 1962-1990).

years because of the generous support of Metro Omaha Medical Society members. In 2002, the Foundation began awarding community grants to various organizations in the Metro Omaha area. To date the Foundation has presented over a quarter million dollars in grants.

- **1991:** John Sage, M.D., with Executive Director Sandy Johnson led the effort to establish the Nebraska Credentials Verification Organization (NCVO), which centralized credentialing in the Metro Omaha area. (See Dr. Sage's account on page 31).



NE State Senator Jesse Rasmussen (center) observes Dr. Perry Williams as he examines a patient as part of the first community Internship program in 1992.

- **1992:** MOMS implemented its first Community Internship Program with goals of demonstrating the priority status of the patient-physician relationship, as well as both the physician concern of containing health-care costs and commitment to quality care. In addition, the program, which provides interns opportunities to shadow physicians in a variety of practice environments, was designed to open lines of communication with community leaders whose decisions impact the practice of medicine and health of the community. To date there have been nearly 160 community leaders, lawmakers, media and business leaders who have participated in the Community Internship Program which is held each fall.
- **1993:** Project Hope/Hope Medical Outreach Coalition, was the culmination of organizations responding to the need for free medical care to the homeless. The Metro Omaha Medical Society and a number of area agencies began collaborating to better serve those in need. MOMS served as the pipeline for recruiting volunteer physicians. In April 1997, Hope Medical Outreach Coalition became a new not-for-profit corporation affiliated with the MOMS. MOMS leadership began to assist in obtaining donated support for surgeries from



(Left to Right) Drs. Tom Ruma, Ron Wax, John Sage, Dan Dietrich, Wesley Wilhelm, Robert Stryker and MOMS Executive Director Sandy Johnson toured the Project Hope "Hopemobile". MOMS involvement with the Hopemobile led to the formation of HOPE Medical Outreach Coalition in 1993.

area hospitals and continued to be a driving force behind volunteer recruitment. Annually, HMOOC cares for more than 1,500 patients, provides more than 3000 referrals to specialists, facilitates more than 350 surgeries, and sees more than seven million dollars donated in healthcare procedures.

- **1996:** The Medical MESS Club made its debut providing the medical community an evening of satirical, comedic entertainment as local physicians performed popular songs re-written to poke fun at the hot topics in health care at the time. This event, now held every other year, raises funds for the MOMS Foundation.
- **2006:** MOMS' involvement in the Smoke-Free Omaha Campaign, an effort led by Drs. Deb Esser, David Filipi, Reed Peters, Linda Ford and Diana Doyle, led to city councilman Franklin Thompson introducing the "Prohibition on Smoking in Workplaces and Public Gathering Places" ordinance, which passed. (See Dr. Filipi's account on page 34). Passage of this ordinance and a similar one in Lincoln contributed to the Nebraska Legislature's smoke-free legislation in 2009 and 2014.
- **2009:** In an effort to provide mentoring to local medical students, MOMS initiated its "Speed Dating for Your Specialty" annual event, which continues each fall. This event allows students to visit face-to-face with MOMS member physicians, rotating every few minutes, to discuss their specific fields of medicine and the related challenges and opportunities. Students gain valuable insight to guide them as they choose their path. 📍



Douglas County Hospital as of October 10, 1926, at the time the Omaha Douglas Medical Society was advocating for a new county hospital. Photo from the Boswick-Prohard/TMTV3 collection at The Durham Museum.

# A HISTORY OF OMAHA'S "UNRIVALLED FACILITIES"

OMAHA POSSESSES UNRIVALLED FACILITIES for the treatment of any kind and every kind of human ailment. Omaha physicians and surgeons are among the very best." These words might have been written last week or last month. In actuality, they come from an April 1928 article titled "Omaha: A Great Medical Center," in Omaha's Own Magazine & Trade Review, a publication that called itself "a journal of constructive optimism."

Omaha has been home to a number of hospitals over the decades, some of which lasted while others did not. Current hospital state licensure designations now include categories of general acute hospital, children's hospital, long-term care, psychiatric and rehabilitation hospitals.

From the largest hospital with 621 licensed beds, to the smallest, each serves an important service to the people of the Omaha area. Methodist Women's hospital, focusing on specialized care for women, is a modern, 114-bed facility. But it is not the first "Women's hospital" in Omaha. Booth Memorial Hospital, at 426 S. 42nd St., replaced the Salvation Army Rescue Home and Maternity Hospital, which was established in 1896 at 24th and Pratt.

In the Medical and Surgical Register of the United States, published in 1917, available online, there were, in fact, 17 registered hospitals. Some are currently in existence. Other hospitals, with curious names, have long since vanished. These hospitals include names such as the "Detention Hospital" at the city jail, and the City Emergency Hospital at 9th and Douglas, and Wise Memorial Hospital at 406 S 24th St.



## OMAHA MATERNITY HOSPITAL

The Omaha Maternity hospital, owned and operated by Dr. Charles W. Fetter, is located at 2204 St. Mary's avenue. It is one of the most modern institutions in the city, as well as one of the most beautiful. Because of its splendid equipment and facilities for the care of mother and child, it occupies a very important place in the community.

Its highly trained staff of nurses, its music, upon which special emphasis is placed, the home-like, cheerful atmosphere of the place—all contribute to make its services one of unique distinction.

The hospital operates 37 beds and last year cared for 1,044 patients, at an operating cost of \$37,000.

While privately owned, the Omaha Maternity hospital is open to any physician of recognized standing.

Dr. Fetter holds the chair of obstetrics and gynecology in the University of Nebraska Medical college.

An advertisement for Maternity Hospital appeared in the Omaha World-Herald January 26, 1930.  
Reprinted with permission from the Omaha World-Herald

Many of the hospitals were sponsored by religious groups. Christian denominations had a hospital in Omaha at one time or another: Danish Lutheran, Swedish Mission, Evangelical Covenant and St. Joseph's, among others.

An example of religious sponsorship is St. Catherine's, located at 9th and Forest Avenue, was located near a train station to be convenient for out of town patients, according to the publication, Omaha's Own Magazine and Trade Review, April 1928, which also provided some financial information. The hospital, started in 1910, had grown to 165 beds by 1928. In 1927, the hospital served 4,264 patients at an operating cost of \$125,000. Of those served, 427 were charity cases. St. Catherine's was founded by the Sisters of Mercy. It has closed, and the Sisters founded Bergan Mercy Medical Center.

The concept of physician-run hospitals is not new. Former Omaha hospitals were founded and run by physicians, either individually or as a group. Among them were Frederick, Lord Lister (named for the pioneer of antiseptic surgery), South Side and Nicholas Senn. Nicholas Senn Hospital, located at 501 Park Ave., at the corner of Dewey Avenue, was built as an investment and expansion of private practice.

It was opened in 1912 by Albert P. Condon, M.D., who named his hospital for a late-19th century Chicago surgeon who'd also been his professor of surgery at Rush Medical College.

Because of limited finances, most of these private hospitals did not stay in business for long, but several provided the basis for other hospitals to be developed.

Nicholas Senn Hospital was re-organized as Doctor's Hospital in 1916, apparently taking in more physician partners, though it seems to have been known as Nicholas Senn Hospital until about 1942.

Parts of the current building date to about 1953, with additions and improvements going through 1965 or 1966. The hospital moved in 1974 to Papillion, forming the origins of Midlands (Community) Hospital.

The original building, later a health club and eventually apartments, has been demolished.

Wise Hospital, built at 24th and Harney through fundraising by Mrs. J. L. Brandeis, was built in 1912, and later abandoned. The Lutheran Hospital Association purchased the building and opened the Lutheran hospital there in March 1931, according to the Omaha Chamber of Commerce Journal, 1931.

continued on page 16 ►



**Audrey Paulman, M.D.**  
Clinical Professor,  
Dept. of Family Medicine, UNMC



**John S. Schleicher, M.A.**  
Associate Professor & Head of  
Special Collections, McGoogan  
Library of Medicine, UNMC

Present Day Hospitals	Number of Beds
Boys Town National Research Hospital	31
CHI Health Bergan Mercy Hospital	400
CHI Health Creighton University	334
CHI Health Immanuel	356
CHI Health Lakeside	157
Children's Hospital and Medical Center	145
Douglas County Community	16
Mental Health Center	
Lasting Hope Recovery Center	64
Methodist Hospital	426
Methodist Women's Hospital	114
Midwest Surgical Hospital	19
Nebraska Orthopedic Hospital	24
Nebraska Spine Hospital	34
Select Specialty Hospital	52
The Nebraska Medical Center DBA Nebraska Medicine	621

# Memories of Past Presidents



Stanley M. Truhlsen, M.D.  
President 1973

The Omaha Medical Society so named in 1866 (later named the Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society and now the Metro Omaha Medical Society) in 1973 when I was president had 12 standing committees functioning under the direction of the Executive Committee. One of the chief concerns at the time was the incursion of the federal government into the practice of medicine.

The need for medical societies, such as the AMA, NMA, the county medical societies and specialty societies, to coordinate their advocacy and respond to our biggest federal challenge at that time, the Professional Standards Review Organization (PSRO) was necessary.

The annual joint meeting of our society and the Omaha Bar Association was a sincere effort by both groups to personally encourage greater relationships with each other. In 1973, we were honored to have Ambassador Shirley Temple Black address us.

During the summer, the Omaha Medical Society hosted an annual picnic for important members of the business community at Peony Park. An effort was made to improve our interpersonal relationships with city leaders.

We had several conversations with the Omaha Fire Department regarding whether the emergency patients should be taken to the nearest hospital or the hospital of their attending physician.

In the future, we all look forward to MOMS continuing efforts to represent our membership and our patients as we face continuing government intrusion and interference into the practice of medicine.

I have fond memories of my active experiences with MOMS, the House of Delegates and the Nebraska Medical Association.

## HISTORY of Hospitals

◀ continued from page 15

The concept of specialty hospitals is also not new. At 33rd and Farnam streets was the Charles Turner mansion, which became the Presbyterian Hospital, and later became the Radium Hospital.



The Charles Turner mansion at 3316 Farnam St. was built in 1889. It later became the Presbyterian Hospital, then the Radium Hospital. It is now the site of Mutual of Omaha. Photo 1890 from the Boswick-Frohards/KMTV3 collection at The Durham Museum.

Advertised nationally in the Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 78, the Radium Hospital of Omaha was "for the treatment of Cancer, Tumor, and precancerous conditions. Fifty rooms devoted entirely to Radium. Treatment. Complete X-Ray Equipment, D.T. Quigley, MD, Director."

Radium was often used as a salt formulation, administered by tubes or needles that could be put into the body or put on the surface of the tumor.

According to the history of the National Cancer Institute publication Radium and the NCI, found on the Internet at history.nih.gov, Dr. Quigley talked about physicians using and potentially overusing radium as it became popular in the 1920s and 1930s. "The practice," he said, "required the highest degree of skill."

The site of the previous Radium Hospital is where Mutual of Omaha now stands.

Over the years, emergency care in Omaha has become an area of specialization. There was a City Emergency Hospital at 912 Douglas St.

According to the archivists at the Durham Museum, "The Hospital treated contagious diseases and maintained a venereal clinic. During the late 1800's and early 1900's, the building was in the heart of Omaha's 'sporting district' and was a 'resort of ill fame' run by Anna Wilson, Omaha's most notorious madam. When she died in 1911, she willed it to the City of Omaha. There was considerable talk as to whether such a gift was to be accepted. When the city took over the property and converted it to a hospital, the stone porch columns of carved nude women were removed and unadorned wooden ones substituted."



The City Emergency Hospital at 912 Douglas Street treated contagious diseases and maintained a venereal clinic. Photo January 24, 1946, from the Boswick-Frohards/KMTV3 collection at The Durham Museum.

In the 1960s, the United States public began to seek increased quality of care in emergency rooms. While the specialty of emergency medicine was not formally established until the 1970s, Omaha was working to improve care. In 1963, there was a medical survey that aimed at hospital facilities to determine the emergency room service at each hospital. The Omaha World-Herald reported in September 1963 that "some doctors and hospital have objected to the new Fire Department policy that rescue squad will take patients only to four hospitals - Immanuel, Children's, University, and County."



At Right: Electrical device being used on a patient by a doctor and nurse at Dr. Wiggener's and Dr. Blanchard's Solar Sanitarium at 1818-20 Douglas Street. They practice "medicine" of a dubious nature. Photo July 6, 1925, from the Boswick-Frohards/KMTV3 collection at The Durham Museum.

Omaha Fire Chief Marin Dineen said those four hospitals provided ongoing care. Lack of personnel in other emergency rooms led to the paper reporting this story:

#### Bang on Door

As an example, he said a patient was taken to a non-designated hospital in the early hours of the morning. The squad had to bang on the door, which was finally opened by a scrub woman. She had to call a nurse, who came down to examine the patient. The squad ended up having to take the patient to the fifth floor and place her in a bed.

"We want to be sure that when a patient is taken to a hospital, our duties are terminated at the door," Chief Dineen said. The squad must know also that any patient, regardless of his financial situation, will be accepted without question.

Dr. Wright said the medical society hopes each hospital in the city eventually will be able to offer the emergency service on a 24-hour basis.

*Reprinted with permission from the Omaha World-Herald September 8, 1963 issue*

The Omaha hospital system has further developed into two full-time trauma centers in the Omaha area, with multiple hospitals providing 24-hour emergency care.

As the Omaha Douglas County Medical Society grew, its member physicians needed a home, and that home was the Medical Arts Building in downtown Omaha. The society building was, in 1927, according to Omaha, A Great Medical Center:

*|| This affords a beautiful room where visiting physicians may obtain information concerning the medical affairs of the city and have access to a daily clinical bulletin which lists all the operations, ward rounds and special clinics that are being given daily in the various hospitals of this city. ||*



New Douglas County Hospital built in 1932 between 30th and 42nd Streets & Woolworth Avenue. Photo from the Boswick-Prohard/KMTV3 collection at The Durham Museum.

Practicing at the Medical Arts building were, by their own advertising, "175 of Omaha's finest surgeons, physicians, and dentists." It was, at the time, considered one of the foremost buildings of its kind in the United States. Many names can be found there that still have Omaha connections. The First National Bank is now on the site of the old Medical Arts Building.

In 1828, the Omaha Douglas County Medical Society worked with the Chamber of Commerce to advocate for, develop and fund the Douglas County Hospital. This would separate the Poor Farm from the County Hospital, allowing for better care of patients. A series of meetings were held, including the county commissioners, Bar Association, the Rotary, Kiwanis, Professional Women's Club, and other community organizations. A new hospital was completed.

The goal of the Omaha Douglas County Medical society was stated in Omaha's Own Magazine in 1928.

*|| In a practical way let us physicians demonstrate our unselfish interest in the well being of all classes by advocating sufficient hospital facilities for the treatment of all kinds of diseases and when such are available and in operation, see to it that they are well manned, and efficiently administered. One's head hangs in shame at the delayed reception of the tuberculous, the cancerous, the venereal, the chronic patient when knocking at the entrance door. ||*



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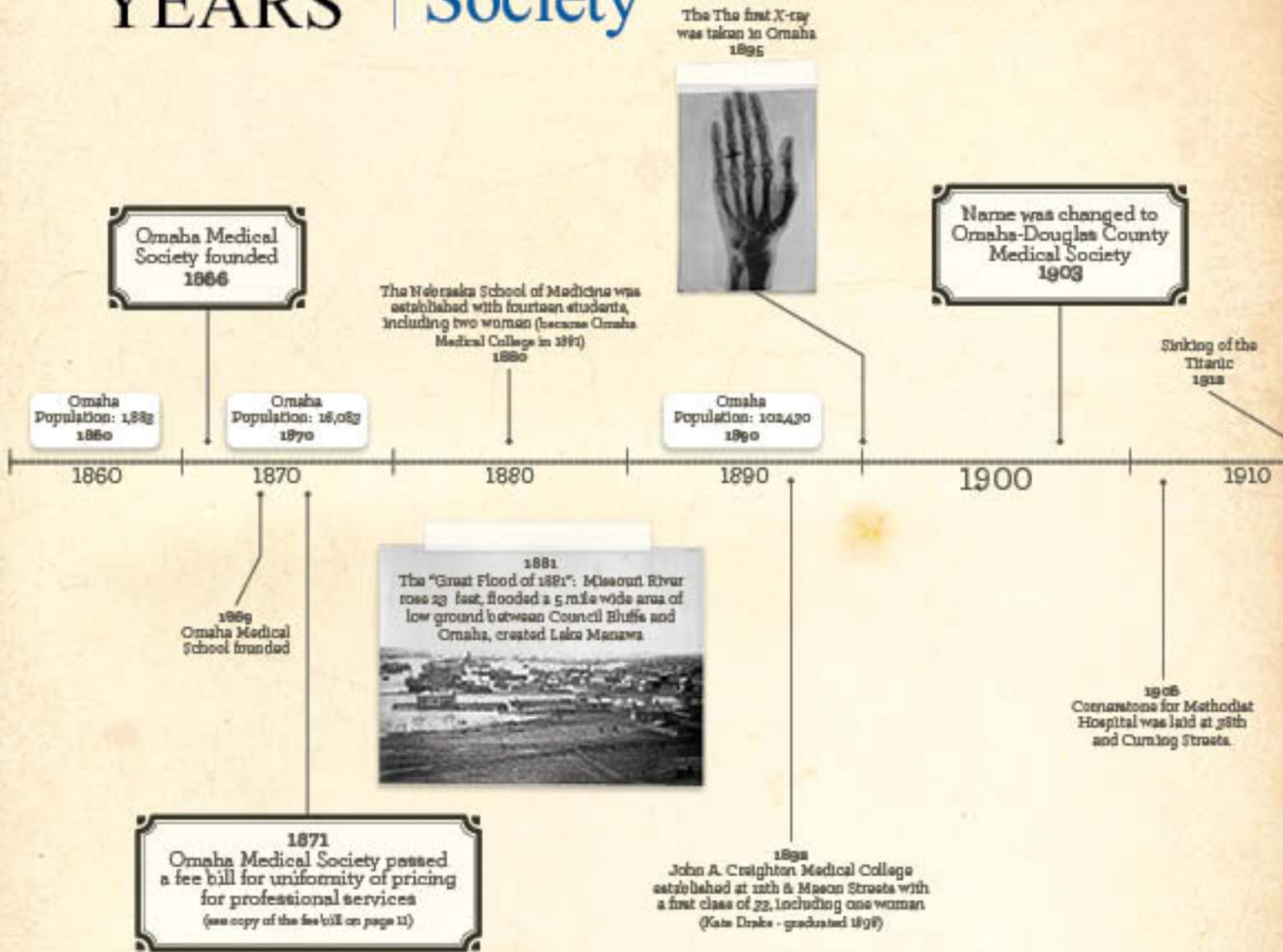
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Metro  
Omaha  
Medical  
Society



A CENTURY AND A HALF OF POSITIVE IMPACT

The spouses of the society's physicians founded a social and volunteer organization (later referred to as the Metro Omaha Medical Society Alliance, or MOMSA) which existed until 2013 raising well over \$125,000 to benefits various local medical causes.  
1927

Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society achieved a 25-year goal via the passage of L.B. 397 consolidating the city and county health departments (which was completed in 1950)  
1949

Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society initiated a public health education campaign  
1925  
(physicians contributed a total of 15 health talks printed gratis in Omaha newspapers covering disease and diet, x-rays, prenatal care, and fractures)

The first "Health Fair" was held in Omaha, sponsored by the Junior Chamber of Commerce and Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society  
1955

Children's Memorial Hospital began serving patients  
1948



Omaha Population: 251,117  
1950

1964  
Berger Mercy hospital opened

Omaha Population: 191,601  
1920

Great Depression  
1929-1939

World War II  
1939-1945

1920

1930

1940

1950

1960

1914-1918  
World War I

Penny Park opened for dancing  
1920

1928  
Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society executive office established on the 17th floor of the Medical Arts Building

Former Martin Bomber Plant near Bellevue became Offut Air Force Base  
1948

1950  
First College World Series was held in Omaha at Municipal Stadium

June 7, 1926  
The Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society held a special community meeting to address the County Hospital. That night the medical society adopted a plan and began advocating for separation of the hospital and poor farm, and for the construction of a modern six-unit hospital which led to bond approval the following November.

1938  
Omaha-Douglas County Medical Milk Commission drafted a new city milk ordinance in response to improper pasteurization

1954  
The Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society's *Your Doctor and You* TV program aired 13 episodes with subjects of first aid, medical costs, cancer, childhood diseases, growing old and others



1952  
A polio epidemic hit Omaha  
1954  
Omaha selected as 1 of 200 cities in the "field trials" of the Salk D...  
1957  
The Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society conducted "Operation Knockout" public education campaign for inoculation against po...

A huge tornado struck Omaha causing hundreds of millions dollars damage on a nine-mile path through the center of Omaha including damaging Bergan Mercy Hospital and Alvarion.  
1975



Omaha-Douglas County Medical Society changed its name to the Greater Omaha Medical Society  
1976

MOMS held its first Community Internship Program inviting business leaders and lawmakers to shadow physicians.  
1992

MOMS hosted the first "Speed Dating for Your Medical Specialty" mentoring event for local medical students.  
2009

The Greater Omaha Medical Society became known as the Metropolitan Omaha Medical Society (MOMS)  
1979

The Sarpy County Medical Society merged with MOMS  
1992

1966 - First Omaha soldier in Vietnam was designated as Missing in Action (MIA)  
1966

Omaha Population: 312,949  
1990

Deoxy Park is demolished  
1996

Omaha Population: 299,357  
2002

1970

1980

1990

2000

2010

1978 The Interstate system including I-680 and I-480 was completed

1987 Major snow and ice storm caused a reported \$50 million in damages

1976 Nebraska Hospital-Medical Liability Act a cap on the amount a plaintiff could recover from a qualified health care provider

1991 MOMS founds the Nebraska Credentials Verification Organization (NCVO) to centralize credentialing in the metro-Omaha area



2000 Children's Hospital opened at 8200 Dodge Street with 142 beds at a cost of \$87.8 million

2006 MOMS was the driving force that led to an Omaha ban on smoking in workplaces and public gathering places and contributed to passage of the Nebraska Legislature's smoke-free legislation in 2009 and 2014.

Omaha  
to participate  
also vaccine  
Medical Society  
and extensive  
promoting  
to

1993 MOMS partnered with Project Hope to address medical care for the homeless. These efforts led to the founding of Hope Medical Outreach Coalition in 1997 which has now provides care for 1,500+ patients, referrals to 3000+ specialists, facilitates 250+ surgeries and sees more than \$7 million of donated healthcare procedures each year.





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## EFFORTS TO SILENCE "THE QUACKERY"

AS LONG AS THERE has been the practice of medicine, there have been examples of "quackery," describing questionable medical practices, to say the least, and often outright medical charlatanism. Examples abound of "cure-all" snake oils to relieve everything from a toothache to neuralgia. Or even solutions for teething babies, whose ingredients included alcohol and even opium.

Throughout this issue of the Physicians Bulletin you will see examples of such advertising presented for as not only a real life representation of quackery, but also, in many cases, for your entertainment.

Since the founding of the Omaha Medical Association in 1866, member physicians sought to protect the public and went to great measures to speak out against such practices and the advertising to promote them.

This is evident in an excerpt from "History of the City of Omaha Nebraska and South Omaha" by James W. Savage, John T. Bell and Consul W. Butterfield. (New York and Chicago Munsell & Company, copyright 1894).

*!! Prior to 1891 all efforts to secure the legislation necessary to protect people of Nebraska from being a prey to medical quacks had been of little avail. The consequence was that Nebraska occupied a position in the rear of the states in their progress in this direction.*

*In the spring of 1890, agitation was commenced with renewed energy to secure the much needed legislation. While notable service was rendered in this work by a number of physicians, not residents of the city, Omaha may fairly lay claim to the credit of the splendid results which were achieved. The funds needed for pushing the work were contributed mainly, though not entirely, by Omaha physicians, and a great amount of effort was given by them. Candidates for the legislature were interviewed and pledged to the support adequate medical legislation, in case of their election. Physicians were present continuously, during the session of the legislature, to resist efforts, thoroughly organized, to defeat the measure. In short it*

*was only by the most untiring vigilance and earnestness of effort that the law of March 1891 was secured.*

*Shortly before the enactment of the new law, a strong effort had been made by the Omaha Medical Society to enforce the then existing law of 1881 and 1883. It was the special design to ascertain by its practical application, wherein this law as defective. The result of this effort was that many of the quacks were driven from the State; and yet many points were discovered at which there was great room for improvement in the laws. !!*

Despite passage of laws aimed at questionable, if not deceptive, medical advertising and practices, examples were still evident for the next several decades (and arguably still today).

In an issue of the Omaha Medical Society Bulletin in 1928, president A. P. Overgaard, M.D., pulled no punches in his editorial on this subject:

*!! Up until very recently an Omahan could pick up at least one newspaper without noticing the fake rupture cures, imposing photographs of "famous" doctors, the "inventors" of their wonder cures, advice on how to eat everything and yet not suffer indigestion, and lot of other hokus-pokus stuff which spoils the morning meal of any intelligent reader. But alas, this one newspaper, too, is a thing of the past. The "painless" dentist, the notorious cold tablets, the "scientific" scalp cleaner and dandruff cure have not invaded the pages of the one newspaper which until lately, boastfully, and justly so, condemned the acceptance of medical advertisements in the lay press.*

*Sucker exploitation is apparently, if not a strictly ethical, at least a very profitable game. !!*



Mr. L. O. Tinkham

### 8 Boils at Once

Afflicted me—in fact I think no one ever suffered more from impure blood. Every people or branch would spread, sometimes making sores as large as a dollar. Four bottles of Hood's Sarsaparilla have thoroughly purified my blood and my skin is smooth as an infant's. I never felt better. L. O. TINKHAM, Newhall, California.

## Hood's Sarsaparilla Cures

Hood's Pills are prompt and efficient

## DR. FRANK: DESTINED TO BE A PHYSICIAN



**E**XCUSE MURIEL FRANK, M.D., for having a lazy Saturday.

"I went out to dinner yesterday, so I'm tired today," she said. "I am 96 years old, you know."

Dr. Frank took time from a recent quiet Saturday to discuss her medical career, what keeps her busy these days and the significance – or lack of it in her mind – of her place in MOMS history as not only its first female president but also its oldest living past president.

In 1989, Dr. Frank was installed as the first woman president of the Metropolitan Omaha Medical Society making both local and national news. The World-Herald, in a bylined story by medical writer Mary McGrath, noted the significance, even though Dr. Frank downplayed it. The story noted that her husband of 38 years (at the time), Maurice Steinberg, M.D., who had retired three years previously, served as the organization's president in 1974. Finally, the story noted that the World-Herald had checked with the AMA and had not discovered a husband and wife who had previously served as leaders of metropolitan medical societies. Her installation as MOMS' president made national news as USA Today included a blurb in its Jan. 10 edition.

Dr. Frank recalled feeling destined to be a physician. The longtime anesthesiologist at Methodist Hospital said her parents wished for her to be a physician – and she never wavered in her career choice. She recalled being in a medical class of all men and two women, herself included.

She described her male classmates as brothers and recalled a time – at least from their vantage point – they came to her rescue. One evening, Dr. Frank and her female classmate had been to the movies. She realized she had no money for cab fare and started walking home at midnight. A car stopped and two classmates got out. "They gave me hell for being out alone, got me in the car and took me home."

Dr. Frank doesn't have much to say about her term of MOMS president in 1989. Her term, she recalled, was void of controversy and full of collegiality. As for her board members, she said, "they were my buddies." Having retired 15 years ago to care for her ailing husband, she said she no longer is connected with medicine to have a viable conversation about comparing health care in her day and today.

A review of her columns that ran in The Bulletin shed some light on what was important to her at the time. In the February-March edition, she called for professional unity among physicians to counter what was perceived as the high cost of medical care. Finding a balance between what Americans can afford and what they have come to expect in the form of the best medical care in the world is a challenge. "It is absolutely necessary that the physicians of this country work in unity. We must look at ourselves first and work toward a system fair to everyone. That means membership in the organization that is ours.

"We accomplish nothing divided."

In the next edition, she objected to the medical community "hawking its wares." The outcome: "We are losing gentlemanly and gentlewomanly associations with one another. Instead, our association is one of competition. We have reduced the service of medicine to a business."

Michelle Knolla, M.D., said she views Dr. Frank as a pioneer for women in medicine. Dr. Frank always was willing to help, said Dr. Knolla, a past president of MOMS and the MOMS Foundation.

### PRESIDENT'S PAGE

#### First Woman President Calls For Professional Unity

by Muriel N. Frank, M.D.



Dr. Frank: "We accomplish nothing divided."

There are many reasons that I chose membership only as a focus of my term as president of the Metropolitan Omaha Medical Society.

The emphasis on health cost containment is accelerating. The government programs, insurance companies, businesses, and some consumer groups are increasing their efforts to reduce the high cost of medical care.

Although there are myriad reasons that the price is what it is – the tremendous advances in what is dubbed technology, first dollar coverage, the cost of bureaucratic interference itself to name just a few – the bottom line is that the resistance in the minds of those paying the bills is "Doctor bills."

The focus of their efforts is in this area. Mr. Joseph Callero was quoted in the paper the other day, while testifying before a government committee, as deploring the high cost of "Doctor's bills."

Finding a balance between what the country can afford to afford and what the people of this country expect in the form of the best medical care in the world will be difficult. We must maintain the high standard of medical services that we have achieved.

It is absolutely necessary that the physicians of this country work in unity. We must look at ourselves first and work toward a system fair to everyone. That means membership in the organization that is ours.

"We accomplish nothing divided."

THE NATION'S NEWSPAPER

ACROSS THE USA:  
NEWS FROM  
EVERY STATE

# USA TODAY

OMAHA — Dr. Muriel Frank, Methodist Hospital anesthesiologist, will be installed as 1st woman president of 123-year-old Metropolitan Omaha Medical Society. ...  
BEATRICE — Employees at ...  
Nebraska Industries — state's only ...  
African



"I always used to joke with her that she was short in stature but tall in personality and energy. Her legs were pumping furiously as she rushed from room to room. She was always ready to mentor to the other women in the medical field."

Audrey Paulman, M.D., said Dr. Frank probably wasn't aware of the influence she had on physicians, including herself. Dr. Paulman credited Dr. Frank for steering her toward a career in medicine.

Dr. Paulman explained that she moved to Omaha when she was a junior in high school. Her lab partner was Dr. Frank's son, who spoke highly of his parents, especially his "mother the doctor."

"He spoke so highly of her that I decided to become a doctor as well. Before that, I had never considered the possibility. Once I was in practice, I always appreciated Dr. Frank's belief that we were stronger working together as a medical society. She frequently set the tone and expectations for those around her."

Dr. Paulman also recalled Dr. Frank's performances in Medical M\*E\*S\*S especially her performance as Mrs. Thurston Howell III ("Gilligan's Island") in a skit about failed hospital mergers and as "Secret Agent Granny to the tune of "Secret Agent Man" she searched for Medicare fraud. "She was always eager and ready to participate."

Five years ago, Dr. Frank was included in a story how Nebraskans are living stronger and longer. "Use it or lose it," Dr. Frank was quoted as saying in Connect, a UNMC publication. The story focused on how UNMC was addressing a shortage in geriatric health-care professionals.

Dr. Frank, 90 years old at the time, was one of 14 seniors enrolled in strength training and Tai Chi classes at UNMC's Center for Health Living. "It's absolutely important to exercise," she said at the time.

And she says so now. Although she no longer does 100 push-ups each day – boy style – as she did at the time of the UNMC article, she still participates in regular Tai Chi and exercise classes. "Just minor exercises. Touching the floor. Moving this way, moving that way. Nothing very exciting. I'm just a first-class bum."

She now spends most of her time at home, reading. "I do anything that strikes me. Mostly, I like to read."

Dr. Frank said she and her husband started a family later in life. She had two sons, both physicians, although one passed away. Her family includes six grandchildren, three boys and three girls.

"They were all here for Thanksgiving. We had a grand time." 🍷



Marjorie Frank surrounded by several of her fellow past presidents at the 2013 MCOMS Past Presidents luncheon. Pictured are (back row): Drs. Perry Williams, Allen Dvorak, Rowen Zetterman, Lee Retelsdorf, John C. Mitchell

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Anne O'Keefe, M.D.  
Senior Epidemiologist  
Douglas County Health  
Department



## JUST A PLANE RIDE AWAY

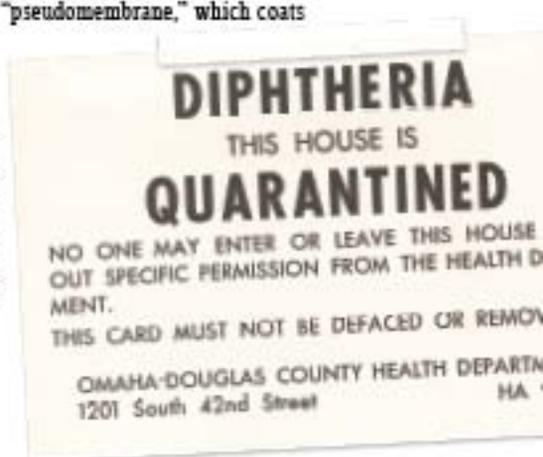
### A GLIMPSE OF PANDAMIC DISEASES THAT HAVE COME TO OMAHA IN THE LAST 150 YEARS

**I F YOU GOOGLE** "just a plane ride away" and "outbreak" or "pandemic," you will find many references to disease outbreaks that start with a traveler. In recent years, outbreaks of measles, SARS, 2009 H1N1 influenza, MERS and Ebola, have all spread across the world by plane. All of these have touched Omaha in one way or another.

What about before air travel was common? Omaha has never been isolated from pandemic diseases, even when people came here slowly on boats and trains.

Surveillance of communicable disease in the United States started in 1878 with the passage of the National Quarantine Act, which required the surgeon general of the Marine-Hospital Service, the precursor of the U.S. Public Health Service, to report on the sanitary condition of vessels departing for the United States.<sup>1</sup> Beginning in 1887, surveillance statistics were collected for U.S. states and reported in *The Weekly Abstract of Sanitary Reports*, which later became the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*.<sup>1</sup> The first disease surveillance statistics for Omaha were reported in 1890 when 471 cases of diphtheria, 55 cases of measles, 107 cases of scarlet fever, and 139 cases of typhoid fever were recorded. (Douglas County Health Department surveillance data) This was also a time of increasing immigration and rapid population growth. The population of Omaha increased from 16,083 in 1870 to 30,518 in 1880 to 140,452 in 1890.<sup>2</sup> A formal local health department, the Omaha-Douglas County Health Department, was not established until 1949.

Diphtheria, once a major cause of illness and death in children, is a disease caused by the bacterium *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* and spread by respiratory droplets. A toxin produced by the bacteria causes a thick coating, or "pseudomembrane," which coats tissues of the throat and impairs respiratory function. Diphtheria deaths in Omaha were first recorded in 1880 (42 deaths) and non-fatal cases were first tracked in 1911 (30 cases).<sup>3</sup> The worst year in the 20th century for diphtheria in the United States and in Omaha was in 1921. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 206,000 cases of diphtheria were reported in the United States in 1921, resulting in 15,520 deaths.<sup>4</sup> In Omaha (population 191,601) that





year, 828 cases and 84 deaths of diphtheria were reported. A vaccine became available in 1924 and active immunization against diphtheria was implemented in schools in 1927. Diphtheria rates dropped quickly in the United States and in other countries that began widely vaccinating.

Polio, a crippling and potentially fatal disease caused by poliovirus infection, was first clinically described by British physician, Michael Underwood in 1789.<sup>3</sup> Although it was likely present before, polio was first documented and recorded in Omaha in 1918, with subsequent outbreaks occurring every few years. (Douglas County Health Department surveillance data) The largest recorded numbers were reported in the late 1940s and early 1950s. In 1948, 298 cases, and in 1952, 498 cases, the highest yearly total reported (Omaha's 1950 population: 251,117). The community was in a panic. Children were not allowed to go to public swimming pools and other public venues for fear of catching the disease.<sup>4</sup> In the late 1950s and early 1960s after polio vaccine was in common use, there was a dramatic drop in cases, with the last case reported in Omaha and Douglas County in 1964. Despite worldwide efforts to eliminate polio, it has not been eradicated and remains a threat.

A large local outbreak of rubella infection (also known as German measles or three-day measles) in 1999 demonstrated that outbreaks are still possible even when immunization levels are high in the general population. The outbreak was detected by an astute physician who diagnosed rubella in a young Hispanic adult male who worked in a meat packing plant. An extensive outbreak investigation was initiated after other cases were identified in the plant.<sup>7</sup> A total of 98 cases were reported in Nebraska and 30 in Iowa. Most of the cases were in young adults who

*continued on page 28* ▶

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Thomas B. Whittle, M.D.  
Vascular Surgeon

# OMAHA'S History of Pandemic Diseases

◀ continued from page 27



*A girl stricken with polio lies in an iron lung at St. Joseph Hospital. Photo 1956 from the Omaha World-Herald/John Savage collection at The Durham Museum*

were born in Latin American countries where rubella vaccination programs had not yet been established for children. The outbreak also spread into the community. Among the 83 cases in Douglas County, 14 were US-born children in two child care centers who were too young to be immunized and seven were pregnant women. One case of congenital rubella syndrome occurred during this outbreak. Congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) is a rare but severe illness that can cause miscarriages, stillbirth, and a constellation of severe birth defects in infants infected in utero. Preventing CRS is the most important reason for an urgent public health response.

Public health officials initiated control measures that included vaccination campaigns in seven meat packing plants targeting 3,000 workers. However, at the same time, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), was conducting a major program, "Operation Vanguard," designed to root out undocumented workers by examining employment eligibility records of all meatpacking employees in Nebraska. Workers were to be notified that they would be interviewed at their

worksite. In a statement issued in September 1999, the INS revealed that the goal was that unauthorized workers would resign prior to the interview.<sup>8</sup> Because of the timing, workers also did not show up for work when public health officials scheduled immunization clinics as they thought the clinics were actually a ruse by the INS to trap them. This resulted in CDC requesting a halt of Operation Vanguard so that at-risk workers in the plants would show up and be vaccinated to control the outbreak.

Influenza is a threat from the past that continues to haunt us year after year. Influenza pandemics have been occurring for centuries, including four in the last 100 years: 1918, 1957, 1968, and 2009. The most devastating pandemic in modern times was the great Spanish influenza pandemic of 1918. An estimated 50 million people died worldwide.<sup>9</sup> During the last three months of 1918, the height of the Spanish Influenza pandemic, at least 1,024 citizens of Omaha died of the disease. This number was derived from individual death records recorded in handwritten ledgers

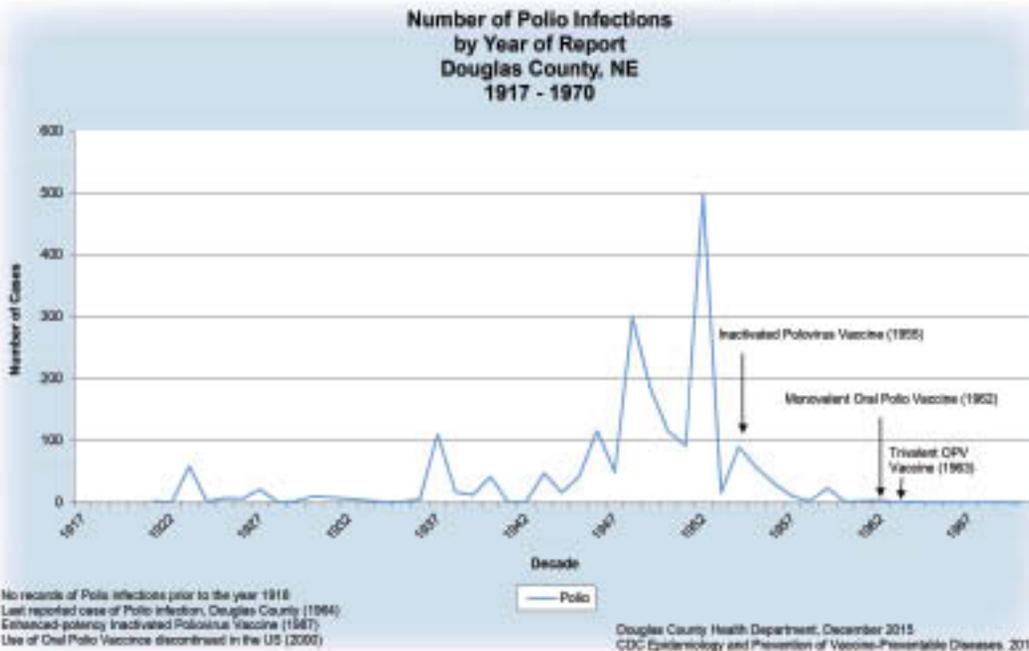
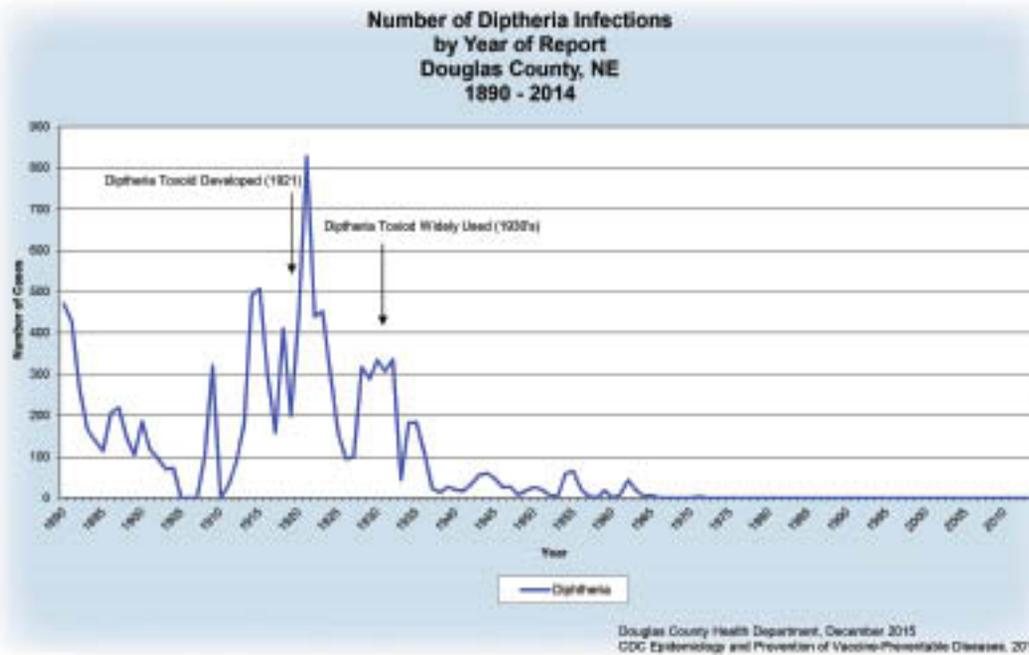
where "influenza" was the stated cause. The true number of pandemic influenza deaths in Omaha was likely far greater as deaths due to pneumonia may have been influenza-related. The epidemiology of the pandemic in Omaha mirrored what was reported elsewhere in the world in that over 60 percent of those who died were previously healthy adults, 20 to 40 years old, which is not typical of seasonal influenza epidemics.

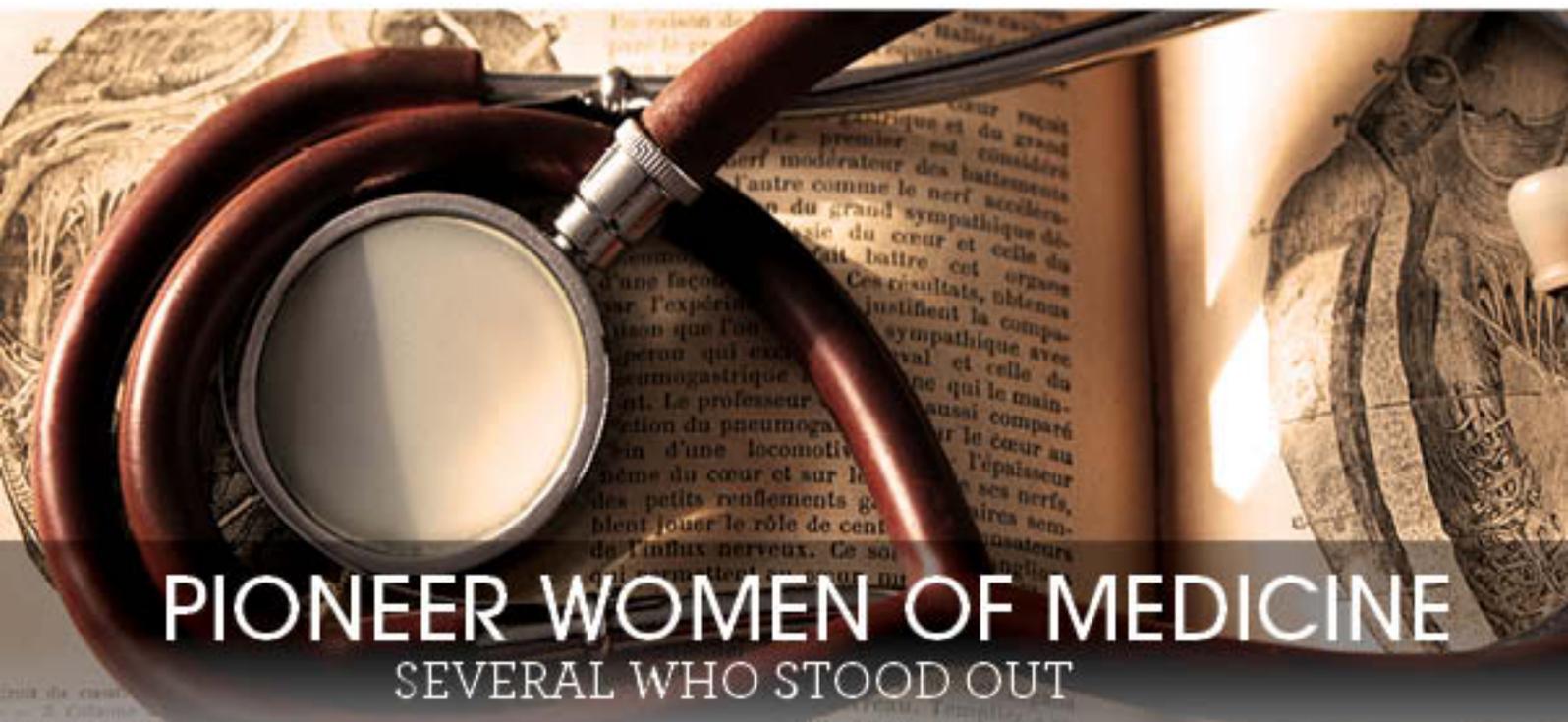
With the development of vaccines and antibiotics, we once thought that we had conquered infectious diseases. But as we know now, we will continue to fight emerging and reemerging infectious diseases and to identify new challenges such as antibiotic resistance and remote diseases such as Ebola. Omaha will always be just a plane ride away from the next threat.

*Acknowledgement: This article would not have been possible without the input and historical knowledge of Carol Allensworth, MPH.*

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# PIONEER WOMEN OF MEDICINE

## SEVERAL WHO STOOD OUT

**OMAHA – AND NEBRASKA –** has provided its share of female physicians who made their mark on medicine.

The challenge, said Robert Wigton, M.D., a Nebraska medical history buff, said picking those who especially stand out isn't easy. Here are several with Omaha ties, who played a significant role in medicine decades ago.

### Olga Stastny



*Dr. Olga Stastny: Photo used with permission from the Nebraska State Historical Society.*

Married at age 17 and widowed 12 years later, Olga Stastny found herself alone and the mother of two. One year later, she entered medical school.

The Wilbur, Nebraska native graduated in 1913 and completed her internship at a Boston hospital before returning to Omaha to private practice. She didn't stop there, according to an article by Stepanka Andrews-Koryta in *Nebraska History*. Early in her medical career, Dr. Stastny, along with other female physicians, found themselves on the periphery of the American Medical Association. So they came together and formed the Medical Women's National Association, later renamed the American Medical Women's Association (AMWA).

In 1919, Dr. Stastny joined the First Unit of the American Women's Hospitals in France, where she was to do relief work in the devastated area of Seine-et-Marne, east of Paris. "Dr. Olga Stastny is today remembered chiefly for her medical service overseas after World War I," Andrews-Koryta wrote. "She and most American women doctors returned to the United States with awards and decorations from various European and Eastern countries for their heroic work. Still, the military treated them as second-class citizens."

With the passage of the Sparkman-Johnson bill, signed into law on April 16, 1943, "Dr. Stastny lived to see the enactment of this legislation permitting women doctors to enter the Army and Navy Medical Corps on an equal footing with their professional brothers."

### Georgia Arbuckle



*Dr. Georgia Arbuckle: Photo used with permission from the Nebraska State Historical Society.*

Georgia Arbuckle, M.D., made the most of the time she spent in Omaha.

The Princeton, Missouri, native earned her teaching certificate at age 15 – largely because of the influence of her mother and stepfather who encouraged her educational endeavors.

After her mother died, she lived with a Dr. and Mrs. Dinsmore, who directed her focus to medicine. When the Dinsmores moved to Omaha, Georgia tagged along.



In 1881, she was part of the first class of the Omaha Medical School with eight male students, and later became its first female graduate.

(Dr. Wigton reported that it was not unusual for women to have attended medical school at that time. Private medical schools often had difficulties filling their slots and needed the revenue.)

Dr. Arbuckle would practice medicine in Omaha for about three years. During that time, she was elected vice-president of the Douglas County Medical Society.

In 1884, Dr. Arbuckle joined her stepfather, Tom Reeve, when he decided to move to Sidney, Nebraska. She settled near Minatare, Nebraska, and established her medical practice, which she later moved to Gering. She was the only physician in a 75-mile radius and spent much of her time in a buggy traveling to visit her patients.

Dr. Wigton said he uncovered a story about her ingenuity while practicing medicine: A homesteader was digging a well when the bucket dropped and the spinning windlass struck him in the head causing a large depressed fracture. Dr. Arbuckle flattened a silver dollar on a wagon wheel to repair the defect and partially closed the scalp over it. The homesteader lived past the age of 80.

Of further note: Mari Sandoz' "Miss Morissa" was based on Dr. Arbuckle's life.

Three women hold places of historical note at Creighton University School of Medicine. Kate Drake, according to university historical documents, was among the first class of 33 students. Little is known about Drake other than she was from somewhere in Nebraska and apparently did not remain more than one year in the medical school. Her acceptance at Creighton is landmark as she became the first woman ever admitted to any of the 28 American Jesuit colleges or universities. The John A. Creighton School of Medicine graduated its first woman physician in 1894. Because she was not listed as a student in the opening class, it is assumed she was a transfer student. She graduated as Dr. C. B. Offersen without indication that she was a woman. In 1913, she was identified as Mrs. M. Ziegler and located in south Omaha. The first woman graduate to complete all her medical school training at Creighton University was Anna Marie Griffith, who graduated from the Medical School in 1898 in a class of 13.

The Nebraska College of Medicine started out as the Nebraska School of Medicine and Surgery, as a preparatory school (for one year only) and enrolled two women in its one and only class – Dr. Whipple and Dr. Hertzmann (the wife of another student). In 1881, the Omaha Medical College started with women enrolled in many of its graduating classes yielding a total of 16 women physicians before becoming the University of Nebraska College of Medicine in 1902. The first female graduates under this name were Dr. Dora Henderson and Dr. Freida Dummer.



## Memories of Past Presidents



**John Sage, M.D.**  
President 1994

In the late 1980s, every physician who applied to a hospital for staff privileges had to submit his or her credentials to each hospital for acceptance. As most physicians were applying to several hospitals, this represented a time-consuming and unnecessary burden for each physician and hospital.

In order to unify the process, Sandy Johnson, MOMS executive director at the time, and I founded \*NCFVO - Nebraska Credentials Verification Organization so that a single application could be submitted to each hospital for verification. Initially only three hospitals participated, but over the 25 years since its inception, it now serves facilities and physicians throughout central and eastern Nebraska and western Iowa.

# Memories of Past Presidents



**Marvin Bittner, M.D.**  
President 2012-13

The most notable thing during my tenure was the selection of Carol Wang as executive director. This position is critically important.

At the state level, scope of practice, particularly involving optometry and nurse practitioners, and nationally, the Affordable Care Act were an issues of importance.

The biggest challenge I faced was maintaining NCVO operations during the transition of executive directors.

My biggest accomplishment was simply maintaining operations during a time of transition in the medical community toward larger integrated systems.

Where do I see the Metro Omaha Medical Society in the future? My "crystal ball" is cloudy! The critical factor: profoundly reconsidering our roles and goals in an environment that is strikingly different.

Key issues in the strikingly different environment include trends both medical (more physicians as employees of large organizations) and general (more expectations of organizations to provide great experiences as opposed to expectations of services or mere fulfillment of professional commitments).

## MOMS Past Presidents

1866-67	Dr. J.P. Peck	1907	A.B. Somers, M.D.
1868	Dr. G.C. Monell	1908	E.C. Henry, M.D.
1869	Dr. James H. Peabody	1909	Ewing Brown, M.D.
1870	Dr. H.P. Mathewson	1910	J.M. Aikin, M.D.
1871	Dr. V.H. Coffman	1911	LeRoy Crummer, M.D.
1872	Dr. H.P. Mathewson	1912	H.M. McClanahan, M.D.
1873	Dr. J.C. Denise	1913	B.W. Christie, M.D.
1874	Dr. H.R. Benjamin	1914	F.S. Owen, M.D.
1875	Dr. J.R. Conkling	1915	J.M. Aikin, M.D.
1876	Dr. S.D. Mercer (resigned July 18)	1916	Charles A. Hull, M.D.
1876-79	Dr. George Tilden (took office mid 1876)	1917	J.H. Vance, M.D.
1880-81	Dr. J.P. Peck	1918	Albert F. Tyler, M.D.
1882	None - Society inactive	1919	W.P. Wherry, M.D.
1883	H. Link, M.D.	1920	P.H. Ellis, M.D.
1884	P.H. Peabody, M.D.	1921	A.D. Dunn, M.D.
1885	James Carter, M.D.	1922	Palmer Findley, M.D.
1886	R.C. Moore, M.D.	1923	J.M. Patton, M.D.
1887	None - Society inactive	1924	G.W. Dishong, M.D.
1888	D.C. Bryant, M.D.	1925	Rodney W. Bliss, M.D.
1889	None - Society inactive	1926	Adolph Sachs, M.D.
1890	W.F. Milroy, M.D.	1927	Frank Conlin, M.D.
1891	B.F. Crummer, M.D.	1928	A.P. Overgaard, M.D.
1892	W.O. Bridges, M.D.	1929	J. Frederick Langdon, M.D.
1893	Dr. S.K. Spalding	1930	Charles W. Pollard, M.D.
1894	Dr. J.E. Summers	1931	A.S. Pinto, M.D.
1895	L.A. Merriam, M.D.	1932	B.M. Riley, M.D.
1896	A.F. Jonas, M.D.	1933	Howard B. Hamilton, M.D.
1897	D.C. Bryant, M.D.	1934	Rudolph Rix, M.D.
1898	Dr. Richard C. Moore	1935	Charles McMartin, M.D.
1899	J.P. Lord, M.D.	1936	J. Jay Keegan, M.D.
1900	Harold Gifford, M.D.	1937	Frederick J. Wearne, M.D.
1901	Byron B. Davis, M.D.	1938	Claude T. Uren, M.D.
1902	F.E. Coulter, M.D.	1939	Earl C. Sage, M.D.
1903	W.H. Christie, M.D.	1940	Roy W. Fouts, M.D.
1904	H.P. Hamilton, M.D.	1941	Floyd S. Clarke, M.D.
1905	H.J. Peabody, M.D.	1942	Warren Thompson, M.D.
1906	Warren H. Slabaugh, M.D.	1943	C.M. Wilhelmj, M.D.



1944 Alfred J. Brown, M.D.	1981 Charles M. Bressman, M.D.
1945 John W. Duncan, M.D.	1982 John Mitchell, M.D.
1946 John W. Duncan, M.D.	1983 Milton Simons, M.D.
1947 Robert D. Schrock, M.D.	1984 John F. Fitzgibbons, M.D.
1948 James F. Kelly, M.D.	1985 Richard H. Meissner, M.D.
1949 E.L. MacQuiddy, M.D.	1986 Perry T. Williams, M.D.
1950 Maurice C. Howard, M.D.	1987 Jerald Schenken, M.D.
1951 Lynn T. Hall, M.D.	1988 Richard Svehla, M.D.
1952 Louis D. McGuire, M.D.	1989 Muriel N. Frank, M.D.
1953 Elmer W. Bantin, M.D.	1990 Allen D. Dvorak, M.D.
1954 A.J. Offerman, M.D.	1991 Frederick F. Paustian, M.D.
1955 Charles W. McLaughlin, Jr. M.D.	1992 Blaine Y. Roffman, M.D.
1956 Edmond M. Walsh, M.D.	1993 Patrick E. Brookhouser, M.D.
1957 Paul S. Read, M.D.	1994 John C. Sage, M.D.
1958 Maurice E. Grier, M.D.	1995 Eugene M. Zweiback, M.D.
1959 Harley E. Anderson, M.D.	1996 William C. Bruns, M.D.
1960 Earl A. Connolly, M.D.	1997 H. Jeffrey Deeths, M.D.
1961 Raymond G. Lewis, M.D.	1998 W.J. O'Donohue, M.D.
1962 Dr. John Gardiner	1999 Kevin D. Nohner, M.D.
1963 Willis D. Wright, M.D.	2000 Alan G. Thorson, M.D.
1964 John E. Courtney, M.D.	2001 Michelle S. Knolla, M.D.
1965 Donald J. Bucholz, M.D.	2002 Rowen K. Zetterman, M.D.
1966 John W. Gatewood, M.D.	2003 Britt A. Thedinger, M.D.
1967 Ralph C. Moore, M.D.	2004 Peter J. Whitted, M.D.
1968 John D. Hartigan, M.D.	2005 David H. Filipi, M.D.
1969 John D. Coe, M.D.	2006 Diana L. Doyle, M.D.
1970 Arnold Lempka, D.O.	2007 John C. Mitchell, M.D.
1971 Carlyle E. Wilson, M.D.	2008-09 Harris A. Frankel, M.D.*
1972 T.T. Smith, M.D.	2010-2011 Pierre Lavedan, M.D.*
1973 Stanley M. Truhlsen, M.D.	2012-2013 Marvin Bittner, M.D.*
1974 Maurice Steinberg, M.D.	2014-2015 Debra Esser, M.D.*
1975 C.A. McWhorter, M.D.	2016 David D. Ingvaldstad, M.D.
1976 Robert J. Fitzgibbons, M.D.	
1977 C. Lee Retelsdorf, M.D.	<i>* From 2008-2015 presidents held two-year terms</i>
1978 Richard Q. Crotty, M.D.	
1979 Edward M. Malashock, M.D.	
1980 Frank D. Donahue, M.D.	



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Dave Filipi, M.D.  
President 2005

## Memories of Past Presidents



What I remember most from my year as president is in the passing the Omaha ordinance to prevent public smoking.

One of our members had asked the Omaha city clerk what it would take to pass a non-smoking ordinance. This innocent question was repeated to a reporter, and it soon became news that the Metro Omaha Medical Society was interested in passing a non-smoking ordinance. The next day, I was called by a reporter and a radio talk show host asking me to represent the medical society on this issue.

Then I received calls from the Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition (MOTAC) and the American Cancer Society. MOTAC was a closed group of anti-tobacco interests (which excluded the medical society), which received funding from state grants.

MOTAC, the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association wanted to take leadership as "experts" and control the initiative. Several years earlier, they had made an attempt but failed.

We knew our main opposition would be the metropolitan keno operators, who did not want to lose business to keno parlors in neighboring towns. Therefore, the medical society met with keno executives and agreed to give them a two-year delay to build alternative outdoor smoking structures to protect innocent non-smokers and yet allow smokers to be comfortable. In exchange, the keno interests would support our interests and would fund a statewide campaign to ban indoor public smoking throughout Nebraska within the next three years.

MOTAC and the American Cancer Society refused to agree to this compromise, but instead wanted to

delay this entire smoking ban for another four years. Obviously, this was unacceptable to MOMS, and we decided proceed with an ordinance with the support only of Group to Alleviate Smoking Pollution (GASP), a group of activists disliked by traditional disease advocates because of GASP's strong commitment and passion.

We met with the mayor and city council, explaining our proposal to initially ban 96 percent of indoor public smoking advancing to 100 percent in four years when keno parlors are added. This raised the ire of the American Cancer Society who brought in their out-of-town "experts" who insisted such a proposal that we recommended was certain to fail, and further set back the movement.

After speaking with local politicians, MOMS knew it would be successful and proceeded with the formal ordinance. At the council hearing, our non-smoking proposal was supported by keno, but was opposed by MOTAC, the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association. Politics makes strange bedfellows. The non-smoking ordinance passed.

The Nebraska Legislature did not like protection for just Omaha keno. Therefore two years later, the state passed a bill to prevent smoking in all public spaces. This fortunate but unintended consequence was in reaction to Omaha's "imperfect" ordinance. In the end, MOMS won: A statewide ban on public smoking two years before the "experts" told us that it was possible...for only Omaha!



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## Memories of Past Presidents



H. Jeffrey Deeths, M.D.  
President 1997

My tenure seemed to be controversy free. However, I know Sandy Johnson, MOMS executive director, kept it that way.

Most notable was the development of credentialing, headed by John Sage, M.D.

The hot topic was the issue of sexual abuse. As I recall, several task forces were set up to discuss and implement ideas that were felt to be most important.

The future is murky, with so called Obama care, and so many other entitlements for the population, I would hope MOMS and other medical organizations would be a resource for the politicians and they would listen to the concerns of physicians and patients.

My best memory was the cooperation that the society developed among the medical facilities in Omaha and the surrounding area.

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## Memories of Past Presidents



Rowen K. Zefferman, M.D.  
President 2002

This was a time of relative stability in the health-care markets of Omaha and Greater Nebraska. While medical malpractice issues remained as significant problems in other states, the malpractice act established by the Nebraska Legislature in the 1970's kept tort claim issues stable despite occasional highly visible malpractice cases. In a case heard before the Nebraska Supreme Court, the cap on medical liability was reaffirmed.

I learned that Hope Medical Outreach was (and remains) an important aspect of health-care delivery by Metro Omaha physicians and hospitals to the medically underserved of the Omaha region. The opportunity to serve on its board during my presidency was a highlight.

The Omaha Midwest Clinical Society had shuttered its educational activities. This gave MOMS the opportunity to acquire and adapt its space into a more functional office structure. In addition, the remaining funds of the Omaha Midwest Clinical Society were transferred to the MOMS Foundation, which allowed the Foundation to initiate the provision of grants to local needs.

An important topic during my tenure was the continuing need for a malpractice liability cap during the practice of medicine. As I noted, a Supreme Court case kept the issue before the Nebraska public and its physicians.

During my tenure on the MOMS Executive Committee and as president of the society, the MOMS Foundation began to provide grants to applying civic groups in the greater Omaha area. This activity has progressed drawing civic organizations and the health care community together in a process of greater care and opportunity.

Looking ahead, organized medicine has an important responsibility to speak up on behalf of our patients and their care as well as our membership. We must continue to meet with state senators to discuss relevant issues of health care and seek their counsel to support them in improving the health of people in Omaha as well as greater Nebraska.

Without question, my best memories of MOMS are the people that I worked with both within and without the society membership as I learned about the important work that MOMS, the MOMS Foundation and Hope Medical Outreach carry out on behalf of our patients. I will continue to cherish those memories.

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 so my family  
can depend on ME.

# Memories of Past Presidents



**William C. Bruns, M.D.**  
President 1996

A few memories from my time as president include the creation of the Omaha Domestic Violence Task Force and serving on the founding executive committee as the MOMS representative.

Computers were just starting to show what you could do with a thing called "the internet."

Also, I was very thankful Sandy Johnson was the executive director. She made my job easy and made me look better than I was.

I felt very lucky to have been able to serve MOMS as president.

## DOCTORS FOR MEN




Some men contract disease by being debauched. Others inherit weakness and suffer for the shortcomings of their parents and drag themselves through a life of despondent sorrow they are trying to conceal the wrong course committed. Strength can be regained from weakness than pure water from a polluted fountain. A lifetime of suffering often results from neglecting the first symptoms of disease. It is not so easy of a variety that a man contracts disease or weakness, but that he neglects them—fails to secure the proper treatment for their cure, or he has experienced with too little care.

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**Miss J.P. [Name]**  
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coughs, colds, and  
throat troubles for  
many years, but I  
never found relief  
until I used Peppermint  
as a Family Medicine.  
It is so good for  
the whole family,  
and I can recommend  
it to all my friends.

**Miss [Name]**  
I have suffered from  
coughs, colds, and  
throat troubles for  
many years, but I  
never found relief  
until I used Peppermint  
as a Family Medicine.  
It is so good for  
the whole family,  
and I can recommend  
it to all my friends.

**Miss [Name]**  
I have suffered from  
coughs, colds, and  
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# HAVE YOU BEEN SUPPORTING THE MOMS FOUNDATION?

The Metro Omaha Medical Society Foundation identifies and provides support to community priorities where physician involvement can make a difference in improving the health of the Metro Omaha Community.



**MOMS Foundation**  
7906 Davenport St.  
Omaha, NE 68114  
402-393-1415



# Application for Membership



This application serves as my request for membership in the Metro Omaha Medical Society (MOMS) and the Nebraska Medical Association (NMA). I hereby consent and authorize MOMS to use my application information that has been provided to the MOMS credentialing program, referred to as the Nebraska Credentials Verification Organization (NCVO), in order to complete the MOMS membership process.

## Personal Information

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender:  Male or  Female  
 Clinic/Group: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Office Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Office Mgr. Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Preferred Mailing Address:  
 Annual Dues Invoice:  Office  Home  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Event Notices & Bulletin Magazine:  Office  Home  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Educational and Professional Information

Medical School Graduated From: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Medical School Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Official Medical Degree: (MD, DO, MBBS, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Residency Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fellowship Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Primary Specialty: \_\_\_\_\_

## Membership Eligibility Questions

**YES NO** (If you answer "Yes" to any of these questions, please attach a letter giving full details for each.)

Have you ever been convicted of a fraud or felony?

Have you ever been the subject of any disciplinary action by any medical society, hospital medical staff or a State Board of Medical Examiners?

Has any action, in any jurisdiction, ever been taken regarding your license to practice medicine? (Including revocation, suspension, limitation, probation or any other imposed sanctions or conditions.)

Have judgments been made or settlements required in professional liability cases against you?

I certify that the information provided in this application is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Application to:  
402-393-3216

Mail Application to:  
Metro Omaha Medical Society  
7806 Davenport Street  
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Apply Online:  
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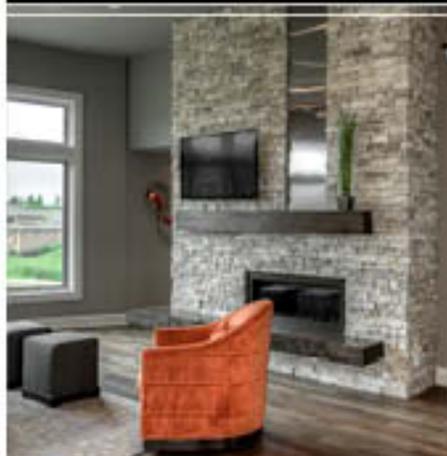
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