

“I have wept for my nation until I am out of tears. Not from a personal depression, but with the deepest grief and sorrow as one might have for a dying loved one who lays helplessly in the hospital. The patient in this case is our nation, America, but she is not so much ill as she is being euthanized...and so, being presently out of tears for the moment, I take up the pen.” Daniel Rundquist

My Dear NYSACCME Family:

I wanted you all to know that while the whole Nation is under gathering restrictions because of CDC guidelines pertaining to Covid-19, it makes it no easier to be apart from our family for so long, and to cancel our educational conferences for the year...a time to learn yes, but a time to gather as a family and renew our friendships, catch up on the latest happenings in the world of Forensic Science, as well as relax, laugh, smile, let loose and blow off some steam. The time we spend together at conference is special, and is something that many of us look forward to as somewhat of a vacation from real life.

While your Board will be meeting via Zoom meetings in June and September, the void which is left by our entire family not gathering this past Spring, and now again in the Fall, is painful and depressing. Much has happened since our last conference and most of it is listed in this newsletter. Perhaps the most important news is that Susan Ernst, our Administrative Assistant has announced her resignation effective at the end of September. She and I have done an in-depth and exhaustive search wading through 93 applicants and selecting one which we are pleased to have hired. AnnMarie Clarke will start training with Susan immediately and will officially be on the payroll as of July 1st. While we won't be together in person to show our thanks to Susan and Steven until our Spring Conference, we certainly don't have enough words to thank them both appropriately. Spring Conference will be an opportunity to wish them well and give them a proper send-off. Please make every effort to attend this special conference weekend not only for the content of the conference, but for this most deserved time of thanks for the dedication of Susan and Steven to NYSACCME over the past 15 years.

Being away from each other is tough. Being unable to share stories and cases with each other over a drink or two is disappointing. Not being able to catch up with personal accomplishments of our friends and colleagues...sucks. However, we need to set an example for others by doing the right things and respecting the directives of those in charge and by doing our part by abiding by the guidelines set forth regarding social distancing and public gatherings. Is it inconvenient, yes. Is the situation one for concern, yes. Do we need to wear a mask, debatable depending on who you ask. Do we need to set an example as professionals and err on the side of caution, yes. Will this eventually end and will life return to normal, yes and probably, but it's dependent on how the rest of the State 'behaves' itself during the flattening of the curve.

This time of separation is difficult for everyone. It's particularly difficult for us as a relatively small but close professional organization. We truly are a family as I continually state at each and every conference. When families are separated for whatever reason, there is sadness and strife on some level. However, when they're reunited it's a happy day. I look forward to visiting with the Board virtually in June and then again in September, but I look forward with great anticipation and excitement, the day when we can reunite once again as a family...in person. I yearn for the day when we can greet each other with a handshake, a hug, a kiss or all three...without fear of spreading or catching something unseen. I look forward to reuniting with all of you, and picking up where we left off...increasing our knowledge of Medicolegal Death Investigation and Forensic Science, and doing it together...as family. God bless all of you while you do your work in dangerous conditions and while you walk amidst those among you who may be asymptomatic, but carriers of the virus. Stay safe, stay well and keep holding yourself to the high standards which have given you great success and prestigious reputations amongst your peers. Keep in touch, and as Billy Joel sang, "...and so it goes, and so it goes."

Love and peace to you all,

Scott M. Schmidt, CFSP, D-ABMDI
President-NYSACCME