

NAME
FOUNDATION

National Association of Medical Examiners

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Welcome to issue 3 of the 2015 volume of the NAME Foundation Newsletter. In this issue, we hope to inform you a bit more about the recently-named NAME Foundation Advocate, our very own colleague and friend, Jan Garavaglia, lovingly known by many of her adoring fans as “Dr. G.” In addition, this issue provides some details about many of the exciting activities of the NAME Foundation, including many that will take-place at the NAME Annual Meeting in Charlotte, NC next month. As always, please remember that past issues of this newsletter are available on the NAME Foundation webpage, which exists on the NAME website (www.thename.org). Thank you for your support, and please continue to support the NAME Foundation.

Jan Garavaglia ("Dr. G")

NAME Foundation Advocate

Jan was born and raised in St. Louis, MO, where she also attended St. Louis University for her undergraduate education, her medical school education, an internship in internal medicine, and training in a combined anatomic and clinical pathology residency program. During medical school, Jan was introduced to the world of forensic pathology by none other than Dr. George Gantner, as he lectured to the medical students. It was during

her internal medicine internship year that she became convinced, through conversations

to “throwing away your medical education,” Jan fully embraced her decision and, after finishing her pathology residency training in St. Louis, she completed her formal training by participating in a forensic pathology fellowship in Miami, FL, at the Dade County Medical Examiner’s Office, in 1987-88, under the direction of Dr. Joe Davis.



Dr. Jan Garavaglia

with Dr. Gantner, that forensic pathology was the career for her. Despite warnings from her first husband that such a career move would be tantamount

Although she was offered a job in Miami following her fellowship, Dr. Garavaglia chose not to accept the position, since her husband did not like southern

Florida, so she followed him to Jacksonville, FL, where she worked as an associate medical examiner under Dr. Peter Lipkovic. The next year, after her husband grew tired of northern Florida as well, Jan followed him again, this time to Ottawa, Canada, where he could complete his fellowship training. During the two year stint north of the border, Jan was unable to work as a forensic pathologist, because of her US citizenship; however, they then moved back to the US, where she worked with Dr. Joseph Burton in a private forensic office in the metro-Atlanta area. After two years there, Jan's husband had also gotten his fill of Atlanta, so it was time to move again. This time, Dr. Garavaglia moved to the Bexar County Medical Examiner's Office in San Antonio, TX, to join Dr. Vince DiMaio. She remained in San Antonio from 1993 through 2003.

In 2003, Dr. Garavaglia accepted a position as Chief Medical Examiner in Orange and Osceola Counties (Orlando area). Prior to her arrival, the office had

experienced numerous problems, including law suits, allegations of incompetence, poor cause of death determinations, loss of confidence by law enforcement, citizen complaints, poor employee morale, and, of especially great concern to county officials, bad media coverage. Jan saw the job as an opportunity to make a great impact and improve the office and the forensic pathology services provided to the community. Following some initial turmoil that occurs with the hiring of a new chief, Dr. Garavaglia oversaw and directed the creation of an outstanding Medical Examiners office which was dedicated to quality and provided excellent services. The office had a pleasant atmosphere and was trusted and respected by law enforcement, the local legal profession, and the citizenry. Jan is particularly proud of the fact that the office became NAME-accredited and she was able to help design one of the first "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" (LEED)-certified morgues in the country.

Despite becoming one of the best-known, and arguably the best-loved, "real" forensic pathologists on television (see Dr. G details below), Jan recently decided to retire from her position as chief in Orlando, in June of 2015, in order to fulfill a promise to her second-husband, Mark, whom she actually knew and dated during medical school. Following her move to Orlando, Jan and her first husband had divorced. Shortly thereafter, she reconnected with Mark, whose first wife had recently died. They married soon thereafter, but he worked as an infectious disease specialist in the Navy in San Diego, so he actually retired from the Navy and relocated to Orlando. At that time, Jan promised that, after her boys had headed to college, she would repay him by following him to wherever he wanted to go. So, Jan and Mark have recently moved to the great northwest. Jan says of her decision, "Although it was terribly hard to give up my position in an office I loved, I love my husband more, so I retired and moved to his hometown

in northwestern Washington State where his family has a large potato farm."

Jan was asked about her role as teacher/educator over her career. She said that she really enjoyed all of her roles as teacher, but especially when that role involved medical students, residents, and fellows. She is especially convinced that reaching-out to medical students is an excellent way to not only educate future physicians about the importance of death investigation and proper death certification, but to recruit intelligent, thoughtful people into our profession.

When asked what she liked most about her job, Dr. Garavaglia responded with the following: "From my beginning conversations with Dr. Gantner to this very day, the aspect I like most about forensic pathology is putting the pieces together to determine, to the best of our ability based on the findings, reason, science, and circumstances, what happened."

We asked Jan about who she considers an important mentor in her career. She responded by saying that absolutely every pathologist, including trainees, that she has worked with has had a lasting influence on her practice of forensic pathology. She makes specific mention of Drs. Lipkovic, Wetli, and DiMaio, and reiterates the fact that Dr. Gantner had the biggest influence on her as far as career choice. Ultimately, however, as with many who have been blessed to have served under his direction, Joe Davis undoubtedly had the greatest influence on her professional career. Of the icon Joe Davis, Dr. Garavaglia offers these fond words of praise and remembrance: "He was always passionate about the field and always enjoyed learning more about both forensic science and medicine. He emphasized the good we do for public health and families, not just the criminal justice system. He believed that the medical examiner's office should be service-oriented and accountable to the population at-large. Later in his career he

also served as a role model when he refused to use his expertise and experience to 'cash in' as an expert witness. He explained to me that he would only take a case to right a wrong, if it appeared that someone was falsely accused by bad forensics or decision making. He would never take-on a case to muddy the waters for either side in a legal tug of war."

We also asked Jan what she considers some of the major challenges facing our profession and how could we work to make improvements. She considers a major challenge to be convincing politicians, bureaucrats, citizens, and even other physicians the importance of advocating for a good death investigation system. Death investigation systems do not just serve the criminal justice system. Rather, good systems serve all aspects of public health. In addition, she believes that our profession should be increasing the utilization of modern technology, including DNA/genetic testing and advanced imaging modalities. Finally, Jan believes

that performing high-quality and meaningful research should be a priority within our profession. Despite our profession's workforce shortage and tendency to be overworked, the material seen in most offices can provide a wealth of information that could be better-utilized to answer many important public health questions. She states, "Our organizations, including NAME and the NAME Foundation, must continue to educate politicians, clinicians, researchers, public health entities and universities about the wealth of information and research opportunities that detailed autopsies can provide. Meaningful research is the only way we will continue to improve as a field."

The latter comments by Jan represent one of the reasons that the NAME Foundation Board of Trustees asked her to join our ranks. Upon her acceptance of the invitation to join the BoT, the Board then quickly followed with an invitation to become the first official NAME Foundation Advocate, a volunteer position to which Jan humbly agreed to take-on, despite the fact that

the job description remains somewhat of a work-in-progress. Suffice to say that our new Advocate is up to the challenge. As can be gathered by her comments throughout this article, Dr. Garavaglia is eminently qualified to be the "public face" of the NAME Foundation in its endeavor to advance forensic pathology and death investigation in terms of education, research, and history-preservation. Jan says of her new position, "I am excited to have been asked to take on the role of NAME Foundation Advocate. One of the Foundation's missions is to advance the field of forensic pathology through advocacy and education about our profession. We need to get the word out about the great societal value of our profession and the potential for even greater benefits. Although this is a new position, with specific duties still being worked-out, the overarching mission will be to create goodwill for our field."

Dr G: Just prior to leaving San Antonio, Jan participated in the filming of the pilot episode of "Dr. G



Jan on the set of Dr. G

Medical Examiner." During the next eight or so years (from 2004 until 2012), while serving in her role as Chief ME in Orlando, Jan filmed 98 episodes of the show. The idea for the show came about because of a Redbook magazine article written about Jan in the late 1990s. Mary Fran Ernst had been approached about the subject of a female medical examiner for the Redbook article. Mary suggested Jan, as well as several other highly-qualified female MEs. As fate would have it, the article was written about Jan, and someone at the Discovery Network who just happened to be thinking about doing a TV show about an

ME saw the article and contacted Jan. At first, Jan refused to do the show, as they wanted to focus on homicides. Jan said she would do the show only if it would accurately depict what MEs really do, including the investigation of a variety of case types. "At first they were not sure they wanted to proceed, so I had to convince them that nearly all cases can be interesting if presented in the correct way, even simple atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease. The producers and directors eventually became intrigued with natural disease (as well as crime) stories that came through the office and we started the process." During

the years that it aired, it was frequently the number one show for the Discovery Health Channel, and in 2007, the show won a prestigious international health-in-media award for the "Best Health Education Series." The show continues in reruns on Discovery channels and has been syndicated around the world. Dr. G frequently receives fan mail from around the globe. Asked to comment further about the show, Jan responded, "The hardest part of doing the show was juggling the time commitment of the show with running the office and raising a family. Except for filming me actually doing cases, the real work on the show was done after my normal work hours and frequently late into the night. Despite the long hours I put in on the show, I very much miss filming the show and the camaraderie I had with the crew. It was a fantastic experience."

Although Dr. G no longer films her popular TV show, and her retirement has just begun, Jan will be staying busy. In addition to her new role as NAME Foundation

Advocate, she plans to do some locum tenens work and perform autopsies for some of the local coroners. In addition to her continued involvement in forensic pathology endeavors, Jan plans to enjoy living outside of a large city for the first time in her life. "I still can't get used to how dark it is at night without street lamps!" She has quickly learned that she loves working in the garden. She mentions



Jan tending her garden.

fresh raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, cherries, apples, and plums, as well as squash, corn, and many other veggies. She says, "This is a far cry from working only with things that are dead. Also, I have gotten to utilize some of my knife skills filleting the salmon that we catch." In addition to her husband, Mark,



Jan and Mark on a recent trip to Roswell, NM.

Jan's family includes two sons and a stepson. Her oldest has almost completed his doctorate in meteorology at Penn State, while her youngest is a junior at Whitman College in Washington State, and her stepson works with and designs 3D printers in Colorado.

Please join all of us in the National Association of Medical Examiners and the NAME Foundation in congratulating our very own Dr. G. Jan Garavaglia, on her recent retirement, as well as on her successful and inspirational career, and for remaining the down-to-earth, caring, family-loving, outstanding professional colleague that we know her to be. We look forward to seeing her and supporting her in her new role as NAME

Foundation Advocate, and we wish her even more success in this new role, as she advocates for the profession that is near and dear to her heart, as well as ours. Congratulations and Good Luck, Jan!

NAME Annual Meeting – Important Information

NAME Foundation Board of Trustees Meeting: Members of the NAME Foundation BoT will have their annual meeting on Friday, October 2, from 7:00 am until 8:00 am, in the same room in which the NAME Board of Directors will meet, beginning at 8:00 am.

Members Annual Business Meeting:
If you are a member of

the NAME Foundation, and you'll be attending the NAME meeting in Charlotte, please plan to attend the Business Meeting, scheduled to take-place on Friday, October 2, at 4:00 pm.

Other NAME Foundation Activities:

This year's annual NAME meeting in Charlotte promises to be another outstanding opportunity for those seeking education and networking. As always, the NAME Foundation will have a presence at the meeting. Attendees will have many opportunities to interact with the Foundation, including the following:

- Annual Silent Auction
- 50/50 Auction
- Presentation of “Best Papers/ Posters” awards
- Morning yoga classes
- Candy sales
- Special entertainment at Opening Dinner/ Reception
- Introduction of NAME Foundation Advocate, Jan Garavaglia
- Special preview of 50th Anniversary commemorative coin

Hisako Noguchi Memorial Fund - Reminder to NAME Members:

We have only a short time remaining to have any donations to the Hisako Noguchi Memorial Fund matched up to a total donation of \$10,000! We have received some donations but we are waiting for you! Remember that this opportunity expires at the end of the upcoming Annual Meeting in Charlotte. Please consider either a donation online or at the meeting. We need your help to fulfil this amazing and unique opportunity to grow the NAME Foundation. Donating is easy. For an overview of the NAME Foundation, how to become a member and the donation process click on this link–<https://netforum.avectra.com/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?Site=NAME&WebCode=Foundation>

Awards for Paper/Poster Presentations

One of the more “visible” functions of the NAME Foundation is its annual

sponsorship of awards presented for “Best Papers” at the NAME Annual Scientific Meeting, including Best Resident (Platform and Poster) Best Student (Platform and Poster), and Best Affiliate Paper. Winners of the awards are provided with a financial award, which, in recent years, has been provided by the NAME Foundation. Everyone is looking forward to this year’s presentations in Charlotte. Thank you and good luck to all of the participants!

NAME Foundation Board of Trustees Update

The NAME Foundation BoT continues its busy year, with numerous activities being addressed by the various committees as detailed below. Last year, a concerted effort was made to increase the number of Trustee members, in order to better enable the BoT to accomplish its many goals. Please note that committee membership is not limited to BoT members. Any member of the Foundation can, and is encouraged to, participate in

committee work. As always, we on the BoT of the NAME Foundation welcome ideas and input from all NAME Foundation members.

Membership Committee

(John Butts, Chair)
– With the addition of a new category of membership which allows corporations and other entities to join the NAME Foundation, this committee is currently working toward increased membership within this group, in addition to individual membership.

Bylaws/Policy Committee

(Greg Schmunk, Chair)
– This committee is working toward making certain that our bylaws and policies are kept up-to-date and in a state that allows maximal efficiency.

Investment/Finance Committee

(Mike Graham, Chair)
– With the current volatility within the present economic environment, Mike and his committee strive to protect the Foundation’s funds, while still maximizing the return.

Fundraising Committee

(Peggy Greenwald, Chair) – The Fundraising Committee has done outstanding work and is in the final weeks of seeking donors for the matching donation campaign in honor of Dr. Tom Noguchi’s late wife, Hisako Noguchi. At the upcoming NAME meeting in Charlotte, the committee plans to unveil a special, limited edition commemorative coin in honor of NAME’s 50th Anniversary (2016).

Advocacy Committee

(Michael Rieders, Chair) – This committee will be working closely with our new NAME Foundation Advocate, Jan Garavaglia. In addition to developing and refining our Advocate’s duties and role, the committee is actively pursuing options for outreach/interaction with the medical community and the general public. The hope is to have a special event in conjunction with the annual meeting each year.

Newsletter Committee

(Joe Prahlow, Chair)
– The goal for this committee continues to be to produce

quarterly newsletters that contain timely and valuable information regarding the NAME Foundation and its activities, particularly as they relate to education, research, and history preservation within the world of forensic pathology and death investigation.

Silent Auction/Meeting Committee

(Amy Martin, Chair)
– Amy and her committee have been very busy preparing for the annual meeting. In addition to the annual silent auction that will take place in Charlotte, we will be continuing the 50/50 raffle, which proved to be quite popular. A variety of other donation/fundraising opportunities will exist at the meeting, including candy sales, a Saturday through Monday morning yoga program, and some special guest entertainment at the opening dinner/reception. Thanks in advance to everyone who donates.

Research Committee

(Joe Felo, Chair)
– As always, the committee continues to coordinate with the NAME’s “Best Paper/

Poster” committee, to ensure that the awards are provided to the winners. At the annual meeting in Charlotte, there will be more than 2 dozen participants. We look forward to an outstanding group of posters and presentations. In addition to providing the financial backing for these awards, Joe’s committee has developed another very exciting proposal for this year’s meeting. With the BoT’s approval, the NAME Foundation will provide a monetary stipend (dollar amount yet to be determined) for all students and residents who have submitted an abstract for presentation at the annual meeting, so long as they meet the following criteria: they must attend the meeting as a registered participant, they must present their paper, they must have submitted a manuscript as per the instructions for participation in the “best paper” competitions.

Education Committee
(Mary Case, Chair)
– This committee is currently working on finalizing the details required so that the

NAME Foundation will be able to assist financially in bringing certain, non-forensic pathology experts to present at NAME’s interim meeting educational programs.

History Committee
(Greg Schmunk, Chair)
– Currently working with NAME Past Presidents’ Committee on EPoster for the 2016 NAME meeting.

Long-Range Planning Committee (Tom Noguchi, Chair) – This committee is currently exploring ways in which the forensic pathology community can potentially strengthen ties with the non-forensic pathology community, as well as non-pathology clinicians.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

NAME Foundation Board of Trustees

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NAME Foundation Membership Criteria

The NAME Foundation is proud to offer membership to any member of the National Association of Medical Examiners who makes an annual contribution to the NAME Foundation. The following minimal annual contribution qualifies membership in the NAME Foundation:

NAME Members: \$50.00

NAME Affiliates: \$20.00



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2015