

SUMMER 2019

# THE message

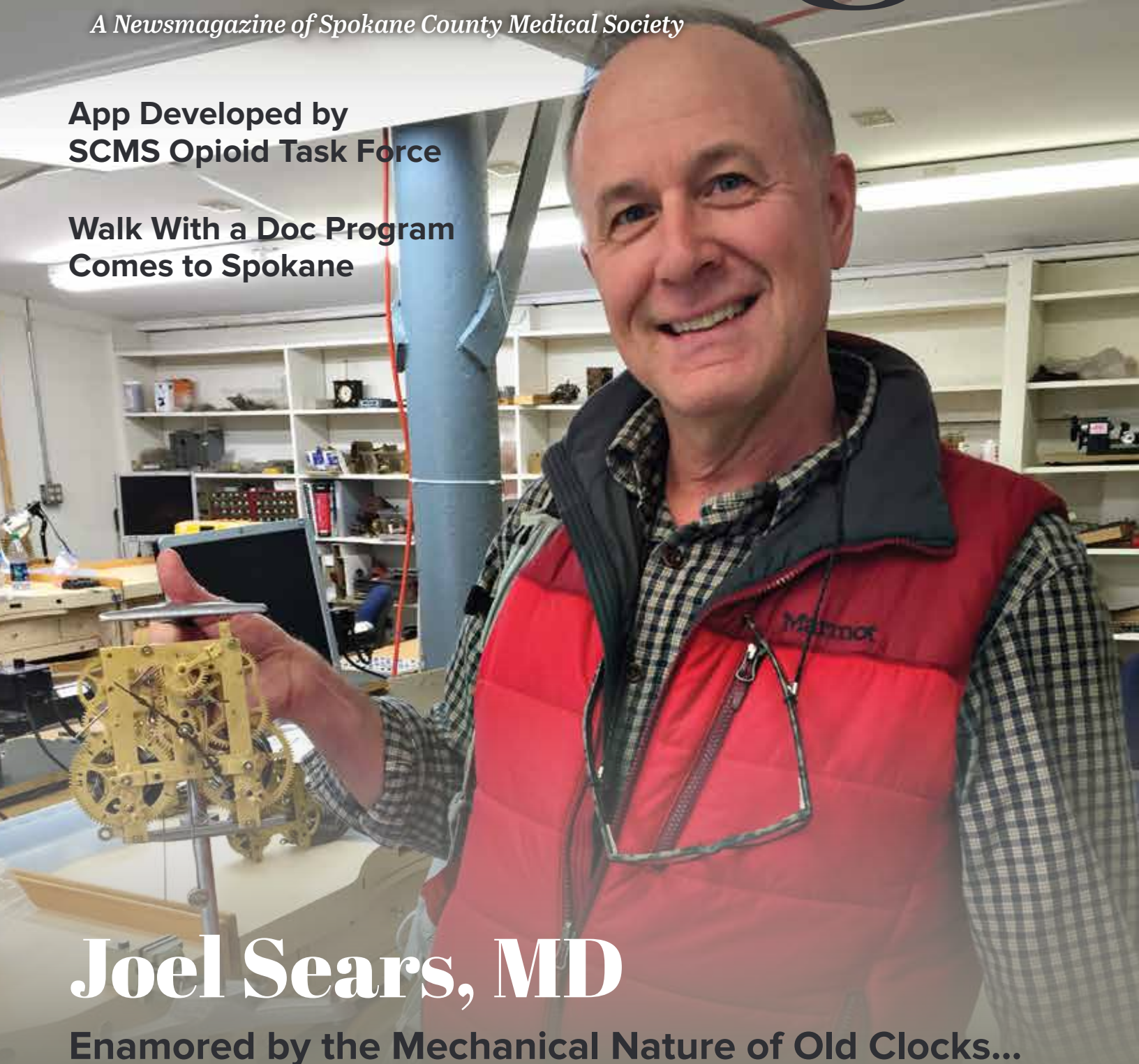
*A Newsmagazine of Spokane County Medical Society*

**App Developed by  
SCMS Opioid Task Force**

**Walk With a Doc Program  
Comes to Spokane**

**Joel Sears, MD**

**Enamored by the Mechanical Nature of Old Clocks...**





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— ERIN HEGARTY, UWSOM — SPOKANE, E-18  
WRITING ON DR. DAVID STODDARD, SPOKANE ENT  
SUBMITTED APRIL 2019

"I have so appreciated the mentorship of Dr. Dave Stoddard over the last few months. I have spent several days shadowing and learning from Dr. Stoddard in his clinic and in the OR, and I come away feeling energized every time. The first day that I was with him, he let me practice examining patients' ears and noses. He always gives me a briefing – in terms I can understand at this point in my training – prior to surgery observation and then explains what he's doing as he goes. I feel comfortable asking any question – whether it's about the nasal sinuses, his residency experience, or his favorite music. I have benefited from simply observing Dr. Stoddard as well. The way he interacts with patients is efficient but never feels rushed; he is kind but also direct; he is a guide, teacher, and calming presence. At the risk of sounding rote, I mean it when I say he is the kind of doctor I'd like to be 'when I grow up.' Thanks for everything, Dr. Stoddard! You're the best!"



# President's Letter



Welcome back to our latest edition of The Message! Here's the latest in our medical community.

## BE AN ADVOCATE - WSMA HOUSE OF DELEGATES

The board of trustees held our caucus meeting in September to prepare for the Washington State Medical Association House of Delegate Annual Meeting. Please link into the WSMA

website to check out the resolutions. You can even put your own input online to the issues and have a voice on topics that affect you and your patients most!

## PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATES

In the public health realm, the Spokane Regional Health District has been reaching out regarding **Vaping Associated Lung Injury**. This is a serious respiratory illness that has been associated with vaping/E cigarettes, leading to 805 illnesses and 13 deaths in the U.S. as of this writing. It is unclear if a particular brand or content of these products is causing the issue. The health district, by way of the CDC, is asking for reports of any suspected cases locally. The illness is associated with cough, fever, respiratory distress, chest pain.

We've also seen a **surge of Hepatitis A** cases regionally and we have a push to get our homeless and high-risk patients vaccinated.

Now that we have **effective treatment for Hepatitis C**, Washington State has presented a plan to eliminate this common and life-threatening infection. They have begun to reduce barriers to the

medications for these patients, including eliminating some prior authorization requirements.

## OPIOID EPIDEMIC AND THE INLAND NORTHWEST

In regard to the **Opioid Epidemic**, the SRHD has initiated a dashboard to track statistics in our region (<https://countyhealthinsights.org>) that gives insight into the current state. According to the site, "Opioid overdose deaths have increased dramatically over the last two decades, leading federal authorities to declare an epidemic. Though the opioid death rate in Spokane County has decreased since 2006, non-fatal opioid events continue to increase. Opioid overdose hospitalizations have increased 2.5-fold since 2004. Opioids are highly addictive substances and a leading cause of morbidity and mortality due to widespread misuse. In the past 10 years, more than 500 people have died from opioid-related deaths in Spokane County—about 4 people per month."

This issue regarding opioid-prescribing is not black and white. The **Washington Medical Commission sent a letter to all providers in the September 2019 highlighting the need for compassionate care of patients dependent on opiates**. They state "We have received reports of patients on chronic opioid therapy whose opioids have been rapidly tapered or discontinued. We are also hearing reports of patients on chronic opioid therapy who are unable to find providers willing to care for them...". In this letter they discourage rapid tapers, citing "Abruptly tapering or discontinuing opioids in a patient who is physically dependent may cause serious patient harms including severe withdrawal symptoms, uncontrolled pain, psychological distress, and in rare instances, suicide."

## SPOKANE EVENTS, MEDICAL AND OTHERWISE

The fall and winter seasons bring some great classic events in the Spokane area. From medical events such as the SCMS Medicine 2019 Primary Care Conference in October to the Internal Medicine Annual Conference, and volunteer events organized by SCMS. If you want not-so-medical excursions, there are First Night Outs, Zombie hikes, Turkey Trots, and snowshoe adventures to be had. One of the best burnout remedies is reaching out to your medical community or other communities to share stories and challenges. If you'd like more involvement with SCMS, reach out to us! ■

Deborah Wiser, MD, 2019 SCMS President

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A perfect summer evening was the setting for SCMS' 9<sup>th</sup> annual river cruise on Thursday, July 11, 2019. SCMS members and their partners cruised to Lake Coeur d'Alene aboard UBS' Serendipity while enjoying great music by Acoustic Full Musician Suhanna Cree, great food by C3 Chef Services, and great conversation with colleagues and friends. ■



*A very special thank you to  
our host and sponsors!*







Top left: Airplane. Middle left: Dr Sears feeding his steers. Bottom left: Scuba diving. Right: Sears working on grandfather clock.

# Joel K. Sears, MD:

## ENAMORED BY THE MECHANICAL NATURE OF OLD CLOCKS...

**By Shelly Bonforti**  
**SCMS Executive Director**

While Joel Sears, MD, spent his formative years in Grinnell, Iowa, he ventured to the Spokane/Coeur d'Alene community in 1991. "Spokane did not have anyone fellowship trained in Mohs and cutaneous surgery," Sears explained. "I was recruited here by the local dermatology physicians and when one of them told me I could be from my doorstep to the ski-slopes in 45 minutes, I said 'Sign me up!' That was nearly 30 years ago so I guess I'm here to stay."

Dr. Sears founded Advanced Dermatology and Skin Surgery in 1991, and his days are full. "Every morning is filled with treating skin cancer patients in our outpatient surgical facility," he described. "Cancers are surgically treated with Mohs micrographic surgery followed by facial reconstructive surgery. Afternoons are devoted to facial plastic cosmetic surgery and other surgical evaluations or follow-up visits."

When not playing with grandkids, Sears tries to busy himself with hobbies. "I have too many hobbies!" he admitted. "Antique clock repair, I love flying my airplane, I fish, I have a hobby farm and raise

my own food, I love skiing, I collect old cars, scuba diving, biking," he continued.

However, Sears declared he's always been enamored by the mechanical nature of old clocks. "...how the intricate gears and wheels of the movement work independently but coordinated with each other in order to keep time and strike chimes appropriately," he detailed. "There are fewer and fewer watch-makers/clock repairmen."

Sears mentioned there are several special tools needed and special skills with metal lathes and milling machines. "It's nice to have an experienced mentor to watch and follow," he revealed. Sears has a shop at home, visits Spokane Clock Shop when he can to observe and learn as much as possible and is a member of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors.

"In a way, clocks are like human patients: they get old and fragile and don't always function properly," he likened. "It requires observation and careful examination of the entire clock in order to diagnose the problem. Oftentimes, 'surgery' is required and the internal movement has to be removed, taken apart and specific pieces of the complicated array of toothed-wheels, springs and





Top left: Flying an airplane. Top right: Fishing. Bottom left: Dr. Sears getting his office help involved bucking bales with his PA, Scott Ahrndt, PAC and medical student Ashley Reed from University of Iowa. Bottom right: Biking.

arbors have to be cleaned or repaired. The pieces are reassembled like a puzzle and, with a little skill and a lot of luck, the ticktocking heart of the clock is revived. With a few tweaks and adjustments, the clock is up and running again. It's very gratifying when an old, broken antique clock can be brought back to life to function for years and years," Sears reflected.

As Sears stated earlier, he also enjoys flying a Cirrus SR22T single-engine airplane with his wife. "This is a plane that has a giant parachute system that can be deployed in case of an emergency allowing the entire plane and passengers to float safely to the ground," he enlightened. "I've been flying for over 20 years. I originally started flying to visit family back in the Midwest," Sears continued. "Flying proved to be a good distraction from the busyness of a medical practice because, when flying, all attention is required in the cockpit and the views are breathtaking. I have been able to use the plane to attend medical meetings across the country. My wife, Honor, has taken several private pilot lessons and is very helpful as a co-pilot," he complimented.

Sears also believes that scuba diving is an exceptionally great way to unwind but obviously not easily accessible. "I also love to putter

out of another neighbor's purebred Angus herd and local hay is purchased from yet another neighbor. It is gratifying to work within our neighbor-community to produce the food on my table," he concluded. ■

*Dr. Sears devotes his practice to skin cancer and facial surgery. After finishing his dermatology residency, he completed full university training on Mohs surgery, facial cosmetic surgery, and laser sciences. He is a fellow of the prestigious American College of Mohs Surgery (ACMS) and the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery (AACS). Raised in Iowa, Dr. Sears received his medical degree at the University of Iowa which included a scholarship at Oxford University in England. He served as Chief Resident during his dermatology residency training, after which he completed the recognized Fellowship in Mohs and Dermatologic Surgery at the University of Iowa College of Medicine.*

*Dr. Sears founded Advanced Dermatology and Skin Surgery in 1991. He is board certified by the American Board of Dermatology, ACMS, AACS, and American Society of Dermatologic Surgery. He served as Trustee on the Boards of Spokane County Medical Society and American Cancer Society. He has lectured nationally and internationally on skin surgical procedures.*



## Membership Recognition

Thank you to the members listed here. Their contribution of time and talent has helped to make the Spokane County Medical Society the strong organization it is today.

### JULY

#### 10 YEARS

**Kingsley C. Ugorji, MD**  
07/01/2009

**Justin R. Racht, MD**  
07/09/2009

### AUGUST

#### 60 YEARS

**Richard E. Steury, MD**  
08/03/1959

#### 50 YEARS

**Hi Young Lee, MD**  
08/18/1969

#### 20 YEARS

**Arvind Chaudhry, MD, PhD**  
08/04/1999

#### 10 YEARS

**Nicole K. Brandt, MD**  
08/01/2009

**Vijayakumar K. Reddy, MD**  
08/01/2009

### SEPTEMBER

#### 30 YEARS

**Paul N. Grubb, MD**  
09/20/1989

**W. Philip Werschler, Jr., MD**  
09/20/1989

**Kathleen L. Meyer, MD**  
09/20/1989

#### 20 YEARS

**Donald A. Coerver, PA-C**  
09/08/1999

**Robert Tulin, MD**  
09/14/1999

**Kristina H. H. Anderson, MD**  
09/22/1999

**Mariah R. Schimpf, MD**  
09/22/1999

## SCMS 2019 Calendar of Events

### NOVEMBER

**SCMS Board of Trustees Meeting**  
November 13, Wednesday, 5:30 p.m.  
Inland Imaging Conference Room  
801 S. Stevens St., Spokane

If you have any questions regarding an event, please call SCMS at (509) 325-5010 between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, or email [shelly@spcms.org](mailto:shelly@spcms.org).

### DECEMBER

**SCMS Member Mixer**  
December 04, Wednesday  
5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

**NEW LOCATION**  
Spokane Club  
1002 W. Riverside, Spokane  
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**SCMS Executive Committee Meeting**  
December 11, Wednesday  
5:45 p.m.  
SCMS Office



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# University of Washington Department of Medicine Names Spokane's Dr. Kang Zhang a 2019 Excellence in Teaching Award Honoree



The University of Washington Department of Medicine named Kang Zhang, M.D., of Spokane, WA, a recipient of the 2019 Richard M. Tucker WWAMI Excellence in Teaching Award.

Dr. Zhang is one of seven recipients that were selected for this award from more than 325

University of Washington clinical faculty members in the Department of Medicine from the states of Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho (WWAMI). The recognition is based on medical student nominations and committee selection for "demonstrated enthusiasm and dedication to the teaching of medical students and residents." Dr. Zhang is an Internist at Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center.

Student comments include accolades for exemplary leadership skills, enthusiasm, extensive knowledge, and relentless encouragement.

"Throughout medical training, learners are often held to high expectations, and there is a tendency to achieve perfection," said Dr. Zhang. A missed diagnosis or wrong answer is often internalized as guilt or a state of inadequacy, which can be a major barrier for active participation, engaged learning and open, critical thinking.

I try to set an environment where my learners feel safe; more specifically, this 'safe environment' means that the learners know their ideas and thoughts are supported. All views are worthy of consideration, and valued without judgment."

The seven faculty awardees included Andrea Christopher, M.D. – Boise, ID; Brian Fortuin, M.D. – Twin Falls, ID; Michael Herring, M.D. – Bozeman, MT; David Mark, M.D. – Hardin, MT; Michele O'Fallon, M.D. – Anchorage, AK; John Thalken, M.D. – Douglas, WY; and Kang Zhang, M.D. – Spokane, WA.

Since 1998, the UW Department of Medicine has honored physicians from Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho (WWAMI) with the WWAMI Excellence in Teaching Award. In 2009 the award was renamed to honor the late Richard M. Tucker, M.D., an infectious disease specialist at Wenatchee Valley Medical Center. Dr. Tucker served as the Wenatchee, WA clinical site coordinator and director for quality and education. The University of Washington Department of Medicine is proud to celebrate Dr. Zhang and the other educators as exceptional role models for aspiring physicians. ■



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**DR. ROBERT W. KENDALL**

(May 1927 – May 2019)

Dr. Robert W. Kendall, beloved husband, father and grandfather died of old age on May 2, 2019 just 29 days shy of his 92nd birthday. Bob was born in Portland, Oregon on May 31, 1927 to AW and Helen Kendall. Dr. Smart, as many of his lifelong friends called him, was a kind, gentle and hardworking man who loved his family and was loyal to his extended group of eclectic friends. In 1960, while on one of many ski vacations to his family house in Sun Valley, Bob met his beautiful bride and wife of 58 years, Jean Ann Oliver and they soon were married in San Francisco in September of 1961. After service in the US Navy at the end of WWII, he went on to graduate from Colorado College, Stanford University and then to the University of Oregon Medical School where he began his medical career as a cardiothoracic surgeon in Portland but soon moved his practice to Spokane in 1963. There at Sacred Heart Medical Center, along with several colleagues, he was a pioneer in open-heart surgery and coronary by-pass surgery where he successfully practiced medicine for over 30 years. He along with his wife Jean, while raising three active children, were very involved in the local community from establishing scholarship funds at the Community Colleges of Spokane to supporting the arts through the Spokane Symphony and the Museum of Arts & Culture. He was truly a philanthropist and was always giving, right to the end. Bob had a true love and passion for the outdoors from snow skiing to backpacking with his family. He loved his vegetable garden and you would often find him in the kitchen cooking short ribs with fresh Yukon Golds and a hot apple pie! He and Jean were avid international travelers and visited well over fifty countries together but had a special love for New Zealand. He was an avid big game and bird hunter but his real passion was as a fly fisherman and he was truly a master! He first learned to fly fish as a young boy with his dad and brother on the Columbia River and its tributaries for salmon and trout in his home town of Astoria, Oregon. He also perfected the art of fly tying and produced many quality flies that were coveted by his fishing buddies.

**DR. KIRK ROWBOTHAM**

(May 1961 - May 2019)

Kirk Rowbotham, M.D., passed away on May 16, 2019, following a heart attack. Dr. Rowbotham grew up on a farm in Ellensburg, Washington. The

youngest of five children, he and his mother shared a passion for show horses, touring the state competing in horse shows and winning numerous awards. He graduated from Central Washington University, then completed medical school at the University of Washington School of Medicine and postgraduate training and internal medicine residency at Internal Medicine Spokane, an affiliate of the University of Washington School of Medicine. Dr. Rowbotham loved God, his family, his work and his music. He met his wife Angela when he was in medical school and she was a nurse. They were married 31 years, raising three children in Spokane. Weekends, holidays and after school evenings were filled with family activities such as boating and kids' sporting events. The family grew accustomed to hearing Dr. Rowbotham practice guitar, mandolin and bass, something he did daily once discovering his love of music. He and his daughter played guitar together. His favorite genre was blue grass, and he formed a trio known around Spokane as Poor Boy's Delight, performing at the Fall Folk Festival in Spokane Valley each year. On Sunday afternoons he could be found at Auntie's Bookstore where he joined other musicians to jam. And on occasion, Dr. Rowbotham took to the stage during business meetings, sharing his sense of humor and love for music to the delight of colleagues. Dr. Rowbotham cared for countless patients as an internal medicine doctor, having joined Inland Empire Internal Medicine in 1993. The group became Physicians Clinic of Spokane, for which he served as president for six years before the group joined Providence Medical Group in 2012. In 2013, Dr. Rowbotham's role grew to oversee approximately 500 primary care, specialty care and hospital-based providers who made up Providence Medical Group in Spokane and Stevens counties. During the next four years, he oversaw the expansion of the group to more than 800 providers in two counties. In 2017, Dr. Rowbotham decided to leave clinical practice in order to take on additional leadership responsibilities within Providence, becoming Medical Group Chief Executive for the Washington and Montana Region, and helping grow the group to more than 2,000 providers and 56,000 caregivers in the two states. Dr. Rowbotham loved caring for patients, and said his decision to leave clinical practice was one of the most difficult decisions of his medical career. "I have truly treasured my relationship with you over our many years of working together," he said in a letter to his patients. "It has been a privilege to walk with you and share in your lives."

**DR. STEVEN M. SANWICK**

(February 1942 – June 2019)

Steven M. Sanwick, MD, passed away peacefully, surrounded by loved ones, on June 1, 2019, in

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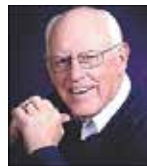


Spokane, Washington. He is survived by his wife Sigrid of almost 54 years, three children, sister and grandchildren. He was born on February 8, 1942.

After graduating from RA Long High School in 1960, he attended college at the University of Washington where he would also graduate from medical school. He began his passion for Orthopedic surgery at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas where he completed his residency. In 1974, he and his family settled in Spokane where he served as the orthopedic surgeon for Fairchild Air Force Base hospital. He later began his own private practice in the Spokane Valley with his partner and lifelong friend Harvey Dewitt. His final years as a surgeon were spent with Northwest Orthopedic Specialists. He experienced some of the most fulfilling moments of his career there where he shared a mutual admiration for patients, nurses, coworkers, and his colleagues.

During his career, he was President and Regional Director of the Washington State Orthopedic Association, served on the AAOS Board of Counselors, and was the founding editor of Orthopedic INSIGHT magazine. One of the highlights of his career was participating with Orthopedics Overseas, taking a 3-month sabbatical to the country of Nepal where he volunteered his medical expertise at the government teaching hospital.

While he was passionate about his work, he was equally passionate about surrounding himself with the great outdoors! More important, he loved sharing it with others. Whether hiking the trails of Glacier National Park, fishing in Alaska, hunting in South Dakota, boating on Lake Coeur d'Alene, and countless other ways, he found his solitude in nature. His family and friendships were always center stage to him throughout his life and considered them his greatest joy and accomplishment. He was a true Zags and Mariner fan. He will be truly missed and never forgotten.



## DR. ROBERT N. WALKER

(October 1936 – July 2019)

Bob passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on July 17, 2019, after a long gradual decline in his health. He was a man of great integrity, warmth and compassion, and he will be remembered and missed by many. Bob was born in Colorado, grew up in Nebraska and Missouri, and after graduating from high school he attended a number of universities in his journey to becoming an obstetrician/gynecologist: North Missouri State and Baylor for his undergrad work and U of Missouri, U of Oklahoma, and U of Washington for his medical training. During that time he also served two years in the U.S. Army one year in Vietnam and one year at Fort Dix. Bob married his wife, Connie, in 1965, and they were a strong life team for almost 54 years. They found their way to Spokane in 1973, and through both professional and social activities, they formed many deep friendships over the years. Bob was a highly respected member of the medical community in Spokane. He and Dr. Steven Brisbois founded Northwest OB/GYN in 1980. It grew into a very large organization over the years, and Bob and Steve developed such a strong relationship that they considered each other to be brothers. During his years of practice Bob served on many professional committees, and after his retirement he served on the Providence Health Care Foundation Board for five years. In his free time Bob loved spending time in the outdoors. He was an avid sailor and did a lot of racing on Lake Coeur d'Alene, and he savored every minute at his cabin and in his boat at Priest Lake. He also loved music and spent a lot of time playing guitar and singing with friends and with the kids and grandkids. He got a great deal of joy from life, and his great smile, his sense of humor and his reverence will remain in our hearts.

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# Spokane Public Schools and CHAS Health collaborate to open a school-based health center at John R. Rogers High School

A former classroom at John R. Rogers High School is being converted into a primary care clinic that will begin serving students this December. CHAS Health and Spokane Public Schools had long talked about the potential for school-based health services. In January 2019, Kaiser Permanente Washington issued a request for proposals seeking to support start-up costs and technical assistance to open school-based health centers across the state. Stated goals of the funding opportunity included improving the health of young people, reducing absenteeism, and increasing access to care for the most underserved populations. Staff at CHAS Health and Spokane Public Schools jumped at the opportunity to apply.

The project received letters of support from a variety of local organizations, including Bemiss Neighborhood Council, Spokane Education Association, Spokane Regional Health District, The Zone Project, Communities in Schools, and WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine. Several neighborhood councils designated community development block grant (CDBG) capital funding to support the internal renovation that would be required to create the school-based health center. The strong local support for school-based health services paid off – this summer Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington awarded the project a three-year operations grant.

The school-based health center will provide convenient access to primary care services in an area of the City where the need is significant. John R. Rogers High School serves 1,500 students in northeast Spokane, and has the highest free and reduced lunch rate (77%) of any high school in Spokane. The school borders three neighborhoods which are each some of the lowest income neighborhoods in the state. 39% of kids in these neighborhoods live in poverty, in contrast to 22.5% of kids Citywide and 14.3% Statewide. Residents in John R. Rogers High School's service area face major health disparities. For example, the Southgate neighborhood has Spokane's highest life expectancy (85.7 years), but the life expectancy in the neighborhoods surrounding Rogers ranges from 73.4 - 76.3 years, meaning individuals residing near Rogers will live as much as 12.3 fewer years as compared with other Spokanites. Providing healthcare services inside of the school system is anticipated to improve both educational and health outcomes.

CHAS Health at John R. Rogers High School will provide the same primary care services available at existing CHAS Health clinics, including medical, behavioral health, pharmacy, oral health screenings, and nutrition services. The new school-based health center will be open year-round (except for school holidays) to students, Monday-Friday, from 7:30am-4pm. ■

## App Developed by SCMS Opioid Task Force

### Dr. Bradley Pope SCMS Opioid Task Force Chair

The SCMS Opioid Task Force has developed an App for small screen devices with the intention of helping clinicians to find other clinicians in a variety of disciplines who can help manage chronic pain and opioid use. This App also has a list of resources and documents that can be helpful to providers who manage patients with chronic pain and/or chronic opioid use.

If you are actively accepting new patients with chronic pain and/or chronic opioid use, your inclusion in this directory will result in more referrals to your practice. By filling out the survey within the App, you will be making your practice visible in this App to other clinicians who are looking for referral resources in a variety of disciplines for the management of chronic pain and/or chronic opioid management.

If you know of other licensed professionals who help patients with chronic pain and/or chronic opioid management, please invite them to look at the App and consider filling out the survey.

Also we need more clinicians to try the app and give us their feedback on how to make it more useful. Please give it a try and pass it along to other clinicians to try. You can access the App now at <https://providerly.firebaseio.com>.

NOW, we need a snappy, memorable, descriptive, short name for the App. Send us your suggestion for the App name to [shelly@spcms.org](mailto:shelly@spcms.org). ■





# WSU College of Medicine launches Range Health, first mobile medical unit

The Washington State University Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine this fall announced the launch of Range Health, a non-profit academic health network designed to bring healthcare to Washington's rural and underserved areas; and unveiled the William A. Crosetto Mobile Health Care Unit, the network's first traveling health clinic.

Range Health is a separate 501(c)(3) entity in partnership with WSU and the College of Medicine. The organization will provide prevention and wellness strategies, as well as treatment to patients across the state, focusing on communities where healthcare is limited. Leveraging its network of doctors, nurses and pharmacists, Range Health will increase access to healthcare while serving as a training ground for future doctors and healthcare providers.

"From the earliest days of the College of Medicine, we envisioned a time when we would not only educate medical students to become doctors in our rural and underserved communities but create new ways of delivering healthcare to the people of our state," said John Tomkowiak, founding dean of the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine and chair of the board and ex officio director of Range Health. "Range Health fulfills this vision and, while there is a lot of work ahead to scale up, extend our reach and expand our offerings, we're excited to take our first steps toward serving the communities that need us most."

Range Health launched with its first mobile medical unit named for William A. Crosetto, a cattle rancher from Othello who passed away



in January 2018. Known to friends as Bill, he worked with Innovia Foundation to create the William A. Crosetto Charitable Foundation to support medical education and rural health among other philanthropic interests. His legacy lives on in the William A. Crosetto Mobile Health Care Unit, which will travel to rural and underserved communities to provide comprehensive primary care, urgent care procedures, and preventive screening for conditions such as diabetes, cholesterol, pregnancy, STDs, asthma and more. The unit is slated to begin providing services in January 2020.

For more information visit the Range Health website at [www.rangehealthwa.com](http://www.rangehealthwa.com). ■

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## Walk With a Doc Program Comes to Spokane

The Family Medicine Residency Program has announced that the Spokane Teaching Health Clinic has an official chapter of the international non-profit organization Walk with a Doc. This organization was started in 2005 in order to improve health through physical activity, strengthen relationships between physicians and patients, and provide access to health information and education. Healthcare providers ditch their white coats in favor of a ball cap and sneakers. This doctor-led walking group is a fun, free, safe place to get some steps, learn about health, and meet new friends. We partnered with the Walk with a Doc organization to launch a local chapter of the program in Spokane in January 2019.

The walk includes a 5-10 minute discussion about a health-related topic, delivered by the walk leader, followed by a 30-60 minute individually paced walk. Our walks will take place the second Tuesday of every month, starting right out the front door of the teaching clinic.

This monthly walk will be part of the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention family medicine curriculum and will be led by family medicine residents. To learn more about the walks, please visit [www.walkwithadoc.org](http://www.walkwithadoc.org). ■







## SCMS 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Medical Education Celebration Cruise

The Spokane County Medical Society hosted its fifth annual evening cruise on the Spokane River aboard The Serendipity celebrating medical education in Spokane on Thursday, September 5, 2019. The event was held for medical and physician assistant students, and limited faculty and practicing physicians who are either involved, or have an interest, in medical education in the community. The evening provided an opportunity for those pursuing careers in medicine to meet and converse with practicing physicians, along with great music by Acoustic Full Musician Suhanna Cree and excellent food by C3 Chef Services. ■



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# Clerkship Year Begins at the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine!

By Chris Anderson, MD

It seems like just yesterday that we attended the first ever White Coat Ceremony for the inaugural class of the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine (ESFCOM) in August of 2017. Two short years later, this bunch of students, this amazing cohort of learners, our future physicians (you just might hear a little bit of pride coming through in my words) has entered their clerkship year. It seems fitting that we should now update our medical community in Spokane County regarding ESFCOM's inaugural students' progress.

The Clerkship year (3rd year) at ESFCOM features a contemporary gem of clinical education called a Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship, or LIC. An increasing number of medical schools in the United States incorporate an LIC during their clerkships. However, very few schools employ a LIC for all of their students' clerkship education. The literature regarding LIC demonstrates that students perform at least as well as students who participate in more traditional rotating clerkships based upon individual schools' internal measures of clerkship performance, on USMLE, and in the NRMP.

More importantly, deeper relationships are built within the student-patient-preceptor triad, student and preceptor satisfaction is generally higher with respect to the educational experiences provided in LIC, and the ideals that brought students into medical school in the first place do not erode in the same way that they may in the context of rotating through clerkships in individual disciplines.

It's all well and good to quote from the medical education literature, but what is actually happening with ESFCOM's MS3s? Is their experience reflective of the great outcomes cited in medical education literature? The early indications clearly affirm that yes, they are. Based upon student assessments so far, students are performing well, and are meeting all the objectives of the clerkship year as measured by the milestones in each of 6 major competencies.

But what do the students have to say about their experiences? We polled our Spokane campus students to see how they feel about their LIC experiences so far, and the responses were overwhelmingly positive.

One of the aspects of LIC that students are finding most gratifying is the ability to spend time with patients and work through a long differential diagnosis.

One student writes, "The extra time and freedom given to medical students allows them to research disease presentation and spend extra time gathering a history from family and friends. I had an extremely positive experience going through just this process last

week. Taking the time to do an extensive history and complete physical exam, and then sit down and write out the most complete differential diagnosis I possibly could made what could have been a hard diagnosis much more straightforward."

Erik Stiles, MS3, felt a similar sense of gratification when he was able to make a diagnosis of a radiculopathy after working through a detailed neurological exam in a stoic patient who came in with some weakness in his leg. Stiles adds that he also felt a sense of deep satisfaction in connecting with the patient.

Students are also collating clinical experiences with disease processes as seen from the perspective of the primary care provider followed by the specialist referral. Phoebe Tham, MS3 notes, "I was with the pediatrician one morning where we just happened to see a bunch of kids in a row with ADHD and Tourette's. That same afternoon, I drove to work with my psychiatry preceptor and saw two kids with the exact symptoms that I had seen that morning. I was able to see the work up the psychiatrist did for both ADHD and Tourette's."

Students are still early in their clinical learning, and are engaged in the process of recognizing their limitations at this early point of their clinical education.

Students are early in the process of establishing continuity with their patients, with the goal of seeing the same patients over time thereby establishing a relationship and trust. They will also establish continuity with their preceptors, as well as with the disease/health cycle over time in multiple contexts from the patient's viewpoint.

Stiles summarizes this early perspective well: "The thing I've struggled with most is the critical thinking, and bringing the evidence-based medicine in. I'm working through these things in real-time... Knowing what we don't know... We are all extremely energetic. We want to learn and do better for our patients. We're willing to work hard, but we still look to our preceptors to tell us [what to do to manage our patient]. I feel successful in this early phase."

And we can't wait to see what success looks like for this bunch a year from now! ■

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## WSMA HOUSE OF DELEGATES



The board of trustees held our caucus meeting in September to prepare for the Washington State Medical Association House of Delegate Annual Meeting. I've shared a few topics below to give an idea of what we're discussing, and to entice you to be involved in process that can give you a voice in a process that affects you and your patients.

A small sampling and summary of the proposed resolutions include:

- WSMA explores options for tracking Washington State physician suicide rates and report back to the HOD in 2020.
- WSMA acknowledges climate change as a critical health issue and work with the medical community to try to abrogate its implications. It also calls for WSMA to support education in this arena and work with policy-making bodies to search for ways to improve this crisis and mitigate its health-related consequences.
- WSMA acknowledges the racial disparities in cancer care and outcomes and commits to providing comprehensive public health solutions for these disparities.
- WSMA encourages and promotes the wearing of approved helmets by all scooter riders and particularly supports policies to encourage e-scooter companies to make this feasible.

This is how it works.

- First, individuals and medical societies across the state write resolutions on topic important to them and their region. These are submitted to the WSMA.
- Resolutions are published in the Delegate Handbook and available on the WSMA website (wsma.org).
- The Spokane County Medical Society Board of Trustees get together to discuss the resolutions and our support or non-support of the proposed resolutions. The caucus for our board allows us to have the meaty conversations surrounding healthcare and then to represent the Inland Northwest and our SCMS constituents at the meeting.
- Those WSMA members that can't make the meetings can visit the Virtual Reference Committees online to weigh in on the topics.
- At the annual meeting on October 12th and 13th, the resolutions are presented, debated, and voted upon by delegates from all over Washington. This allows the various counties in Washington to have their say on topics that will be brought to our legislators.

This is a VERY important part of the mission of the Spokane County Medical Society and a very rewarding way to live up to your oath as a provider! We hope you all will consider either attending the meeting or participating in the Virtual Reference Committees.

**Brenda S. Houmard, MD, PhD**  
SCMS Immediate Past President

## SCMS Member Directory

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# 2020 Social Security & Medicare Update

By Greer Gibson Bacon, CFP®

SCMS Community of Professionals

If you're currently retired or disabled ...

- Your January 2020 benefits will increase by 1.6% based on a "like" change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) for the year ending September 30, 2019. For workers retiring at full retirement age (FRA), this boosts the average monthly benefit to \$1,503 and the maximum monthly benefit to \$3,011.
- If you receive early retirement benefits and continue working, you may be subject to the annual earnings test. Specifically, if you're under FRA, your benefits will be reduced by \$1.00 for every \$2.00 your earnings exceed \$18,240 (\$1,520/month). Except, if you reach FRA in 2020, they will be reduced by only \$1.00 for every \$3.00 your earnings exceed \$48,600 (\$4,050/month). There is no reduction once you reach FRA.
- The standard Medicare Part B premium and deductible are projected to increase to \$144.30 and \$197.00, respectively. If you are a high income beneficiary, you will pay a surcharge on your Medicare Part B and D premiums, too. This is triggered when adjusted gross income (AGI) is \$87,000 or more for single taxpayers and \$174,000 or more for married taxpayers.

If you're still working ...

- The Social Security base wage increases to \$137,700. Employees will pay the 6.2% Social Security tax on earnings up to the base wage and the 1.45% Medicare tax on all earnings. Your employer will pay "like" taxes for your benefit. Since self-employed individuals are both employee and employer, they'll pay a 12.4% Social Security tax on earnings up to the base wage and 2.9% Medicare tax on all earnings.
- If you're a high income worker, you'll pay the 0.9% Medicare surtax on your earnings above a specified threshold. The thresholds are earnings of \$200,000 or more for individual taxpayers and \$250,000 or more for married taxpayers. This surtax was enacted as part of the Affordable Care Act.

Whether you're currently retired or still working ...

- If you're a high income investor, you'll pay the 3.8% Medicare surtax on the lesser of net investment income (NII) or modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) above a specified threshold. As above, the thresholds are earnings of \$200,000 or more for individual taxpayers and \$250,000 or more for married taxpayers. This surtax was enacted as part of the Affordable Care Act.

*Bacon is a Certified Financial Planner™ and President of Asset Planning & Management, Inc., a fee-only firm providing wealth management services to individuals and their families since 1997.*



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# Classifieds

## MEETINGS/CONFERENCES/EVENTS

**AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS AND ALATEEN REFERRALS** Al-Anon and Alateen support groups are available in Spokane County for family members and friends of alcoholics at which men and women share experiences of solving common problems arising from living with or loving a problem drinker. Alateen meetings are for teenage family members and friends of alcoholics and are not suitable for teens with current drinking problems. For further information and meeting schedules contact District2AlAnonOutreach@yahoo.com or (509) 456-2125. Al-Anon and Alateen support groups can supplement medical treatment and counseling therapy. Information provided by Al-Anon District 2 Public Outreach Committee.

**OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS** is a free 12 step program for people who wish to stop eating compulsively. If you would like more information, including no cost workshops for your staff, please contact: 509-328-9972. [www.oaregion1.org](http://www.oaregion1.org)

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### THE ROLE OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS IN THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Join us in Spokane for a panel discussion with local physicians! Dinner reception to follow. Thursday, November 14, 2019. Panel 5:30-6:30 PM; Dinner 6:30-8:30 PM. Hemmingson Center, 3rd floor ballroom, Gonzaga University. Panel available via Zoom. Sponsored by the Underserved Pathway and the WA Academy of Family Physicians. Contact [upath@uw.edu](mailto:upath@uw.edu) with questions. \*Panel discussion counts as an in-person module for the Underserved Pathway. RSVP: <https://catalyst.uw.edu/webq/survey/upath/378134>.



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