EDITOR'S NOTE

A First

It is hard to believe that we are bidding farewell to 2003. It seems only yesterday that the world was scrambling to prepare for the coming of the new millennium. Remember the trepidation with which so many anticipated the calendar rolling over from 1999 to 2000? Much has changed in all of our lives since the arrival of 2000. Some of this change has been painful and hard, but much has been good.

One area of very positive change is in the area of wilderness medicine education. A good example of this is the initiation of what appears to be the first formal fellowship in wilderness medicine at Stanford University this year. The fellowship is being directed by Dr Eric A. Weiss, an assistant professor on the Stanford Emergency Medicine faculty and a well-known expert in wilderness medicine. Eric's goals for the fellowship are to train professionals with a broad fund of knowledge in wilderness medicine who will go on to be active in scholarly activities and research related to wilderness medicine, and who will serve as resources for organizations that are committed to providing care in austere environments such as the military, the Himalayan Rescue Association, and the National Association for Search and Rescue.

Dr Art Kaminski, who graduated from Wayne State University School of Medicine and completed an Emergency Medicine residency at the University of Chicago, has the distinction of being the first fellow in our new program. Art's wilderness interests are diverse, making him a perfect candidate for this broad-based fellowship. During his year, he will get instruction and experience in most of the major core areas of wilderness medicine

such as altitude medicine, diving medicine, toxinology, and wilderness survival. The fellowship includes a 2-month block of time during which Art will be given the opportunity to participate in an off-site rotation designed to specifically develop concentrated expertise in an area of wilderness medicine of his own choosing.

Unfortunately, there has been no extramural funding identified to support the inaugural year of the Stanford Wilderness Medicine Fellowship. Art is funding his own program by working in the Stanford Emergency Department as a part-time attending physician. Given that funding for such fellowships is likely to be an issue for some time to come, this is a model that others can use to initiate wilderness medicine fellowships at their own institutions. It is hoped, however, that extramural funds and grants will become available in the future from organizations that will benefit from the expertise of these fellows. Wilderness medicine fellows will play important roles as future researchers focusing on expanding the scientific basis of our specialty.

If anyone would like more details on the Stanford Wilderness Medicine Fellowship (if you are interested in applying for a position in the future or if you are interested in developing your own fellowship), please feel free to contact Dr Weiss at Eweissmd@aol.com.

As we prepare to bid 2003 farewell, I want to wish all our readers a very happy holiday season. May your adventures in 2004 be exhilarating, rejuvenating, and safe!

Robert Norris, MD
Editor