



Passing the Baton

A baton is a rod or a staff held as a symbol of office. It is a metal pole proudly carried by a marching major or majorette leading a brass band, or it can be a stick with which a conductor leads an orchestra. A baton is also a hollow cylinder passed from each member of a relay team to each succeeding runner. In these various examples the baton not only represents leadership, but also symbolizes group effort toward a common goal.

A discerning reader might have noticed changes in the journal masthead. Close examination reveals new individual names. Each year at the annual session, changes are made in the Board of Trustees and in the Academy officers. The President becomes the Immediate Past President, and all other officers move up. Three members of the Board retire and are replaced by others for a three-year term. Service on the Board of Trustees is rewarding because of the myriad activities of our organization, however, it is demanding and time-consuming work since the Board interacts with more than 200 members of Academy committees and councils. There are Councils of Clinical Affairs, Scientific Affairs, Dental Care, Communications, Education, Annual Session, Constitution and By-laws, Public Relations and Marketing, Government Affairs, and Membership, all established with the Academy's mission of promoting optimal health for all children. Through the wisdom of past leaders, the Academy established a procedure for slow but deliberate turnover of the Board and the officers. This en-

courages individuals to contribute with great energy and then step aside to give others the opportunity to serve. The responsibility of leadership is passed along just as a baton in a relay race is passed on to the next member of the team.

Each year there are also changes in the Editorial Board, the Abstract Editors, and the Clinical Section of the Editorial Board. These groups are comprised of dedicated individuals who work to make this journal happen. They serve long hours reviewing manuscripts, and they recommend which articles should be published. They advise concerning editorial policy, and they maintain the scientific rigor of the journal. Abstract Editors prepare abstracts of scientific literature which appears in other international journals. The Clinical Section of the Editorial Board serves to develop and augment the new clinical section of the journal. Each year new volunteers are appointed to these various groups filling the positions of others who have served commendably and stepped aside.

A new name on the masthead is John S. Rutkauskas. Dr. Rutkauskas has assumed the position of Executive Director of the Academy. He comes to our organization after seven years with the Federation of Special Care Organizations in Dentistry, which includes the American Association of Hospital Dentists, the American Society for Geriatric Dentistry, and the Academy of Dentistry for Persons with Disabilities. He was Managing Editor of the journal, *Special Care in Dentistry*, and a contributing author in

the forthcoming Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health. As Executive Director of the Federation, he forged strong relationships with advocacy groups that are concerned with improved health services for persons with special health needs. Because of his past accomplishments, it is with a sense of excitement and anticipation that we welcome Dr. Rutkauskas as he takes the baton from John Bogert, retiring Executive Director of the Academy.

No longer on the masthead is the name of John Bogert. After twenty-six years in private specialty practice, and thirteen years as Executive Director of the Academy, Dr. Bogert has retired. Those that know him hold him in high esteem. They describe him as unassuming, with the highest ethics and professionalism. He was dedicated to advocacy for children on state and national levels, and he was driven to make the Academy all that it could be. Now his commitment will be to more quiet moments with family, his wife, four children, and three grandchildren. Dr. Bogert dislikes praise, so these words must be rather muted, but as he passes the baton, and goes hunting and fishing, we pause to express our sincere thanks for his contributions to our organization.

June is a month of graduations and commencements. For many it is a time of new beginnings. As changes occur to our masthead, we welcome new names and thank those whose names no longer appear. With nostalgia for the past, we look forward to a bright future.