

SPINE LINE™

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NORTH AMERICAN SPINE SOCIETY THE CLINICAL AND NEWS MAGAZINE FOR SPINE CARE PROFESSIONALS



MANAGEMENT OF ADOLESCENT IDIOPATHIC SCOLIOSIS

CURRENT CONCEPTS

MANAGEMENT OF ADOLESCENT IDIOPATHIC SCOLIOSIS

Management of AIS is in an exciting, evolutionary phase with many new options available to achieve treatment goals.

CURVE/COUNTERCURVE: SCHOOL SCREENING FOR SCOLIOSIS

Should you recommend a school screening program?

SPINE IN SPORTS: CRITERIA FOR RETURN TO ATHLETIC PLAY AFTER A CERVICAL SPINE INJURY

The decision-making process is outlined and general guidelines for return to play are provided.

SOCIOECONOMICS & POLITICS

ECONOMICS OF HEALTH CARE: CONSEQUENCES OF PRICE CONTROLS

Instead of a policy of wage and price controls on physicians, the author recommends a new system that realigns incentives.

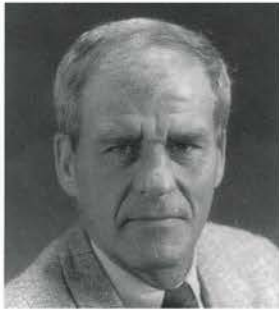
ETHICAL/LEGAL: PROPRIETARY INTERESTS IN DEVICES AND THERAPIES

Potential conflicts of interest for physicians involved in developing new technology are discussed along with remedies.

NASS NEWS

16TH ANNUAL MEETING

Nobel Prize Winner Donnal Thomas and noted genetics researcher Clair Francomano to speak at NASS' 16th Annual meeting.



Volker K. H. Sonntag, MD
Barrow Neurological Institute,
Phoenix, AZ

Each member of NASS makes up a unique contribution to the society, contributing individual interests, ideas and acts. This diversity, which is the membership of NASS, is the key that unlocks the success of NASS.

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Diversity

It was Sunday morning and the afternoon ahead of us was free. In the paper, my wife read about a radio-controlled aircraft competition scheduled for that afternoon. Our 10-year-old son Stephen and I thought it would be interesting to explore because we had never seen such an event. We picked up one of Stephen's friends, and the four of us were off to the east side of the greater Phoenix metropolitan area. East of Apache Junction, a small municipality on the outskirts of Phoenix near the famous Superstition Mountains, an almost invisible sign tacked to a saguaro directed us to the air show. After bumping along in doubt for several miles on a dirt road in pristine Sonoran desert, we rounded a final curve.

There, in the middle of the desert, surrounded by cacti, shrubs and scorpions, was a large, paved airstrip, several bleachers, stands selling food and drinks and 50 to 75 radio-controlled airplanes of various sizes and shapes. We had reached the Superstition Air Park. In the air, two planes controlled by their "pilots" on the ground were doing complicated tricks involving turns and dives. The planes were *exact* replicas of commercial and military planes. We saw Cessnas, Mustangs and F-15s as well as many other types. A panel of 8 judges evaluated and critiqued the planes' performance. The whole thing amazed me. I had seen and heard radio-controlled airplanes before but never imagined that an entire airport, including grandstands and other amenities, had been built for them.

I talked to some of the "pilots" and looked at the material that they gave me. The group belonged to a midsize club with about 250 members. In the greater Phoenix area alone, there are 7 radio-controlled clubs, some with as many as 400 members. They have at least 3 competitions a month, vying for trophies, prizes and cash awards. All pilots must be licensed with the AMA (yes, the AMA – Academy of Model Aeronautics) and, depending on the type of aircraft, must carry insurance up to

\$1,000,000. I was impressed. On the way home we discussed the diversity of people and their interests. Here was an entire subculture that I had no idea existed.

One of my hobbies is collecting stamps (philately). Occasionally on Saturdays, I immerse myself in this subculture by attending a stamp auction with 30 to 40 other collectors. We spend several hours reviewing stamps which are then auctioned. The auction lasts 1 to 2 hours, and I usually come home with "bargains" – a remote stamp from the United States or Germany, or a set that I have long craved. I also collect Olympic stamps and stamps related to medicine. Although I rarely spend more than 1 to 2 hours a month collecting, sorting and arranging my stamps, the process is educational, satisfying and, in my case, relaxing. There are 10 major stamp clubs in Arizona and the American Philatelic Society (APS) has 57,000 members.

The subculture of stamp collectors again emphasizes the wonderful diversity of our society. Diversity is defined as "the condition of being different," and diversity strengthens, not weakens, a community or society. We are each different and have a variety of interests, hobbies and jobs. Each one of us brings a different idea, thought, action to the whole – be it a team, community or society.

Diversity is also what makes North American Spine Society such a unique organization. It is multidisciplinary and not dominated by any one segment of its membership. At 1,551 members, orthopedic surgeons do compose the majority (56%) but the other specialties are well represented: 19% (539) are neurosurgeons, 15% (286) are in physical medicine and rehabilitation, and 10% represent yet other specialists such as radiologists, anesthesiologists and pain specialists. Each member of NASS makes up a unique contribution to the society, contributing individual interests, ideas and acts. This diversity, which is the membership of NASS, is the key that unlocks the success of NASS.