
Comments by Hermine McLeran, BS, MPH, President, AAPHD, 1994

It is a great privilege to be a part of this recognition ceremony for two very special people—Helen and Joe Doherty. They have both had a profound influence on this association and have helped to bring it to the dynamic organization it is today. It seems like I've known Helen and Joe all my professional life because we worked together for so many years.

I first met Helen in 1984 when she became the executive secretary for this association. That was when Joe was secretary-treasurer and they really worked together as a team. Over the years, they were always there, working in the background, making sure that the annual meeting ran smoothly. Helen's caring and quiet nature always kept everyone calm—no matter when major crisis may have been taking place behind the scenes. We learned to count on her planning and attention to detail that made sure everything would run smoothly.

Occasionally, there would be someone who would find something to complain about. It was usually Helen who would receive the complaint, either because she answered the telephone at the central office, or was at the registration desk, or was just a good listener. Helen's response was always kind and gentle. She never argued or was unpleasant, no matter how rude the complainer might have been.

Helen always went the extra mile and in all the years I have known her I have never heard her complain. As an officer, I knew that I could always call Helen and receive the help I

needed. She was an invaluable resource to me as she has been to many others. Her dedication to this association and to each member is unequalled. She makes every member feel very welcome. New members attending our meeting for the first time are always met with a warm and friendly smile, no matter how busy the registration desk may be. You did give us a real scare Helen, a few years ago in Las Vegas, when we arrived one morning to find that you had been taken to the hospital the night before. It was a real tribute to you, Helen, to see how everyone pitched in to keep things running smoothly. We all found out just how much work goes on behind that registration desk.

During the years that I served on the Executive Council and as an officer of this association, I was privileged to know Helen as a colleague and a friend. I will always be grateful to you, Helen, for your compassionate and caring attitude and your willingness to help in any situation.

I first met Joe when I joined AAPHD in 1976. I knew that he had an appreciation for the role of dental hygienists in dental public health programs and supported our membership in this association. He always spoke fondly of the dental hygienists he had worked with both in Wisconsin and in Virginia.

But I really became acquainted with Joe when I became a member of the Executive Council in 1985 and he was secretary-treasurer. I have vivid memories of how protective he was of our assets—I thought he was really a

penny pincher! I soon understood the reasons for his concern. At that time our assets were only \$6,500, which would not have been enough to run the association for an entire year. Joe was determined to improve our financial position. Through his careful management of our assets over the past 12 years, we now have a portfolio of over \$200,000.

When I became secretary-treasurer, Joe really continued to manage our financial affairs. Every month I received complete and detailed financial reports—more than I really wanted to see! The finance committee, which conducted yearly audits, never found a single discrepancy. Joe had a receipt for every dollar spent. It's no wonder his garage is full of boxes!

I worked closely with Joe during his year as president and admired his leadership skills. His vast experience as a public health dentist brought a perspective that spoke to the grassroots members. He knew state and local politics and was able to accomplish so much in his programs by working with the dental and dental hygiene associations, as well as the educational institutions and gaining their support.

Joe, I will always be grateful to you for your wise counsel and guidance during my years as an officer of this association. I could always look to you for advice. Jack Dillenberg and I gave you a few anxious moments when we wanted to spend more money that you thought we should. Fortunately, Rhys was right there behind us, raising money for our projects.