
Comments by Robert J. (Skip) Collins, DDS, MPH, President, AAPHD

Given that Jim Toothaker and Jill Mason have not yet signed a contract to take responsibility for the AAPHD National Office, I am tempted to tell them that all of this wonderful talk about the Dohertys is sprinkled with some degree of hyperbole. I cannot do that, however, because it's all true. Nonetheless, we look forward to your assuming the reigns of the National Office next year. You have been faithful members of this organization for many years and you will find that all of us will be most supportive of your efforts.

I haven't heard it mentioned so far this afternoon, but I believe an unspoken motto of the Dohertys must be "Ask. If it can be done, we'll do it." You heard earlier about how during Helen's illness at the AAPHD meeting in Las Vegas, many of us had to pitch in to take over and assume the work load that she normally would have handled. What you didn't hear was that, behind the scenes, Helen continued to direct us—providing instructions even from the hospital. I was serving as program chairman for the Las Vegas meeting and when I discovered Helen had been taken ill, I called the hospital to inquire as to her condition.

During my conversation with Joe, he asked me to hold on for a moment,

as Helen was giving him instructions to be relayed to me in order to ensure that we would not miss any details in ensuring a successful meeting. Even from her hospital bed, Helen was looking out for AAPHD!

I just can't imagine how, 20 or more years ago, presidents of AAPHD ran this organization out of their homes. However, it's just not what Joe and Helen do for AAPHD, but how they do it—with a special sense of caring and family. You get a true sense that they want to help and that's because they do!

I've just described the important work that Helen does for this organization from behind the scenes. Now I'd like to say a word about Joe. Steven Gould writing about Carl Sagan in an editorial in *Science* earlier this year called him "a fine scientist and the greatest popularizer of science of the 20th century. Carl always conveyed real science in a way that bridged gaps between our various cultures by showing the personal and humanistic side of scientific activity. Carl will always be with us if we as a profession learn from him that the common touch enriches science."

During my residency in dental public health in 1981–82 I, like Steve Corbin, visited the health department dental program managed by Joe Doherty. This time it was the Division of

Dental Health in the state of Virginia. I too had the same impression as did Steve during his visit to Joe's operation in Wisconsin. Two things stood out in my mind then and again at Joe's retirement just a few years ago. He ran a high-quality program, well-grounded in public health science. Joe had an ability to carry the public health message by moving easily among different groups of people because he has an appreciation for the unique contribution each person makes. Joe may not be the orator that Carl Sagan was; however, his wonderful common touch has certainly enriched our science.

I thank Joe and Helen for their time, devotion, and personal touch that they have provided AAPHD and its members for so many years. Next year, as past president, I will serve as chair of the Awards and Nominations Committee. Joe has for many years expressed his desire to begin an endowment that would provide financial support for dental public health residents of the future. Over the course of the next year, I would like to take advantage of our new 501(c)(3) tax status to find an appropriate way to support those students and at the same time recognize in a lasting way the many contributions that Joe and Helen Doherty have made to AAPHD.