

# Physicians Bulletin

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With guest editor  
Karen Carlson, M.D.



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## Dr. Audrey Paulman

A change in Editor,  
but Many Similarities

By Marvin Bittner, M.D.

Change is in store for readers of this magazine.

Fifteen years ago, I started to write for the magazine in the role of editor. Now the magazine is changing editors. The new editor is Audrey Paulman, M.D.

In some respects, though, there's no change. Audrey and I have many things in common.

Like me, she was born in Nebraska.

Like me, she has had an academic career. My base has been Creighton and the VA Medical Center. Hers has been UNMC and its Family Medicine clinic.

Like me, she earned a master's degree years after receiving her medical degree. In my case, I moved into my old medical school dorm 22 years after med school graduation to start the course work for a master of science in clinical epidemiology from the Harvard Chan School of Public Health. In her case, it was a master of medical management from Carnegie Mellon University. She began working on her degree when her son started college, and was awarded her degree within a day of his graduation. Her outlook on family medicine sees the increasing

importance of such degrees. She sees a growing role for physicians in supervising medical assistants and in drawing on skills they can learn from the MBA curriculum.

Both of us had our initial involvement with the Metro Omaha Medical Society a bit more than 30 years ago. Mine was a decision to join because I perceived that all respectable physicians did so. Hers was a response to a complaint lodged against her. It goes back to the time her practice was inaugurated at Lutheran Hospital. To announce her practice, a postcard mailing went out. That mailing generated a criticism of being unethical! It reached MOMS. "Times have changed a lot," she told me.

Both of us became much more involved with MOMS through writing. In my case, it was writing for this magazine as editor. In hers, it was writing for MESS Club.

Both of us have had extensive backgrounds in writing. If you can find copies of my high school newspaper, you can read the articles I wrote as sports editor. If you can dig up copies of the Peoria Journal Star from the late 1960s,



you'll find my byline on sports stories written by me as a part-time staff writer. Go to the Amazon website today and search for material with "Audrey Paulman" as author. You'll find a handful of books on family medicine. That includes Taylor's textbook, of which she is a co-editor. She was an associate editor for the *Journal of Family Practice*. She wrote a column on CIMRO for the NMA publication.

Both of us have committed ourselves to service projects over the years. I've supervised medical students on 19 service trips to Latin America. She has worked with student clinics for the underserved for 15 years. She founded The Good Life clinic. The impetus was an encounter with a 45-year-old African-American woman forced to choose between paying for medicines or buying shoes for her grandchildren.

Both of us enjoy travel. I've made over two dozen trips to Latin America and the Caribbean, eight to Europe, and two to Israel. She's been to seven continents.

Both of us have an interest in family history. I carry with me a French newspaper article about my visit to a school named for two third cousins killed in the Holocaust. She showed me an image from Scotland tied to an ancestor there.

Both of us are baby boomers, but neither of us is giving much thought to retiring soon. "Is there life after medicine?" she mused. "What does life after medicine look like?" She recounted experiencing "the same joy in

taking care of patients that everyone has had." That means going from undifferentiated to differentiated, from symptoms to syndrome. Her commitment to medical education goes beyond simply working with students, which she does enjoy. She's involved in the simulation trucks program and is working to see that the program is sustained.

Unlike me, her education took place almost entirely within the Omaha city limits: Central High School, an undergraduate degree in biology from UNO, and her medical degree from UNMC.

I see two critically important functions of MOMS: policy and camaraderie. She is a delegate to the Nebraska Medical Association. She sees the NMA as a place where good topics are discussed and where it's a good place to be involved. However, she puts special emphasis on camaraderie.

Look back to 1996. That's when she started working on MESS Club with Sandy Johnson, Linda Ford, and Rick Collins. They "made sure each hospital was represented." Bringing the medical community together was important. Singing ability was not a criterion.

It's not much of a secret that I see a key role of the magazine as a means of promoting membership in MOMS. On the other hand, she told me: "I don't have a big agenda." She did observe: "Now I'm at a point in my life when I can write what I want to write."

She does see the magazine as a way to build a sense of community among physicians.

"We don't celebrate things enough," she noted. An article in the magazine, she observed, can give recognition to something like Hope outreach and help people understand the program. "When you write," she added, "you help people in the community." The magazine, she pointed out, is a "leave behind" of what the organizations does and who is involved in it.

I told her of my gratitude to our partners at Omaha Publications. From writing much of the content to laying out the dozens of pages, from selling the ads to paying the postage, from getting it printed to keeping up the mailing list, they do so much. She agreed with me. The forte of MOMS is not magazine publishing. Instead, the task for MOMS and those of us who contribute to the magazine is sharply focused. We identify material of interest. We contribute our experiences and our insights.

Welcome, Audrey, to the editor's position. 🌐