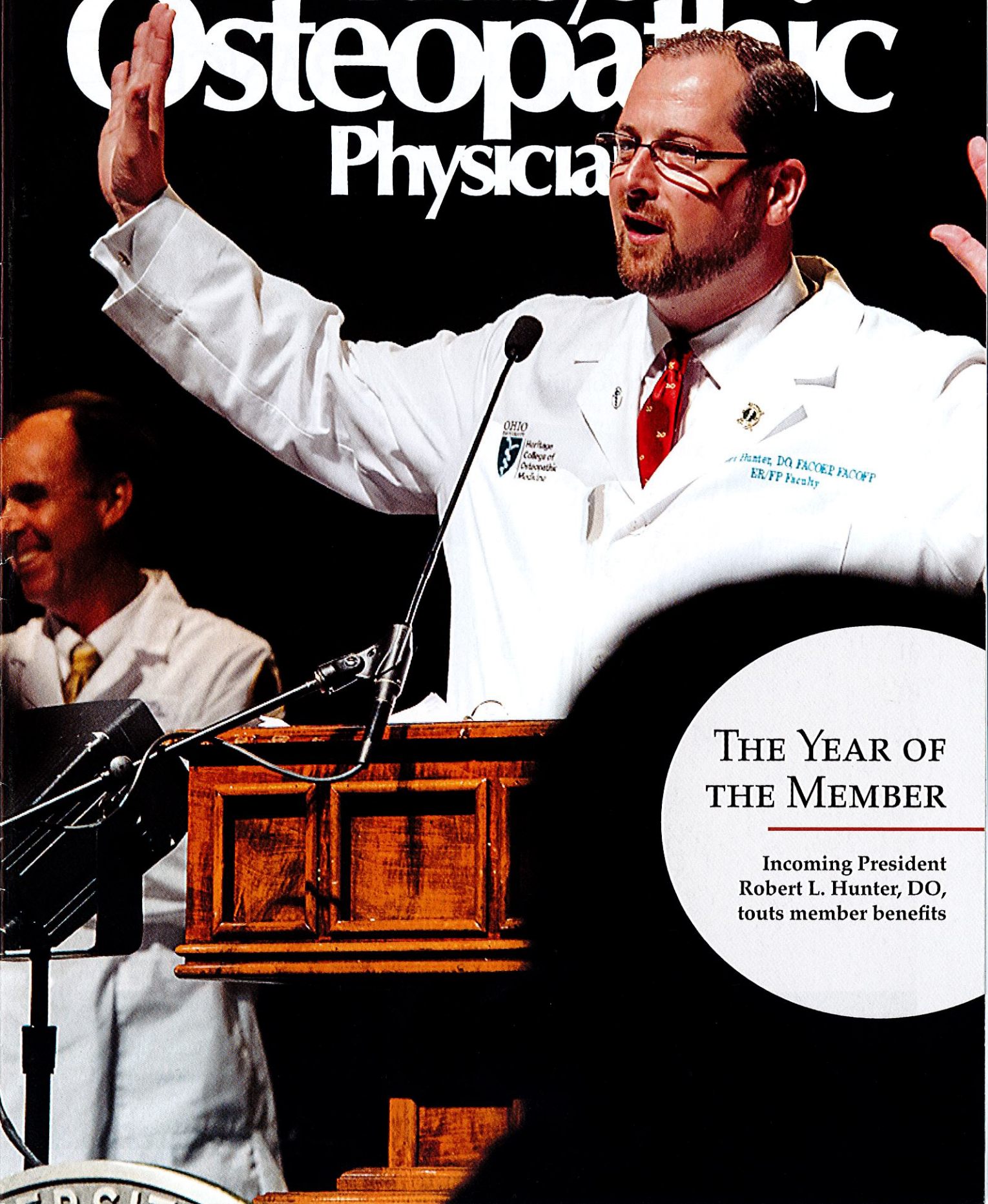


The Quarterly Publication of
The Ohio Osteopathic Association
Fall 2013

Buckeye Osteopathic Physician



THE YEAR OF THE MEMBER

Incoming President
Robert L. Hunter, DO,
touts member benefits

From Coal Miner to Physician

*OOA President
Robert L. Hunter, DO,
emphasizes membership
value, legislative action*

By Stacey Higgins

My number one priority this year is building OOA membership," said OOA President Robert L. Hunter, DO, while on a quick break during his ER rounds at Dayton Grandview Hospital. "So that's why I'm calling my term the 'Year of the Member.'"

It's no wonder Hunter has membership value on his mind when it comes to serving as OOA's president. His passion for getting DOs to belong is built on a long history of public affairs involvement and association participation.

"I have always believed in advocating for the osteopathic profession," he said. "DOs need to maintain our identity. We have something unique to offer that patients are looking for."

The health policy junkie (he is a graduate of the American Osteopathic Association's prestigious Health Policy Fellowship Program) also believes strongly in political involvement. That means working with legislators and state government officials to reform the health care system.

Members of the OOA's annual House of Delegates can surely attest to his legislative acumen as well as his persuasive fundraising skills for the OOA's political action committee (PAC), which he co-chairs. Not only does he talk the talk, he also walks the walk with his wallet. Hunter is a regular and consistent donor, with significant annual giving to the state and national osteopathic PACs.

Hunter, like his predecessors, maintains a full plate of volunteer activities, practice hours and appointments. Boarded both in Family Practice and Emergency Medicine, he sees patients in his office in Huber Heights, helps to staff the Grandview Medical Center Emergency Department, serves as a hospice medical director, and visits patients in nursing homes.

In fact, Hunter is always on the go. He makes frequent trips to Columbus for OOA events, chairs meetings of the Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee for Ohio Medicaid, and frequently meets with legislators to discuss current legislation. The next minute he's on a plane to Washington or Chicago to help plan CME events, or attend a meeting of the American Osteopathic Association, American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians, American Osteopathic Academy of Medical Informatics, or American Medical Directors Association, where he taught a course on OMT for nursing home patients. Then he's in Athens to mentor students at Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine or promoting the importance of OOA membership to residents at the CORE's Resident Advisory Committee quarterly meeting.

"His energy is infectious and boundless," said OOA Executive Director Jon F.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



SIGILLUM UNIVERSITATIS CINCINNATENSIS
RELIGIO DOCTRINA CIVILITAS
PRAE OMNIBUS VIRTUS
M D C C C I V

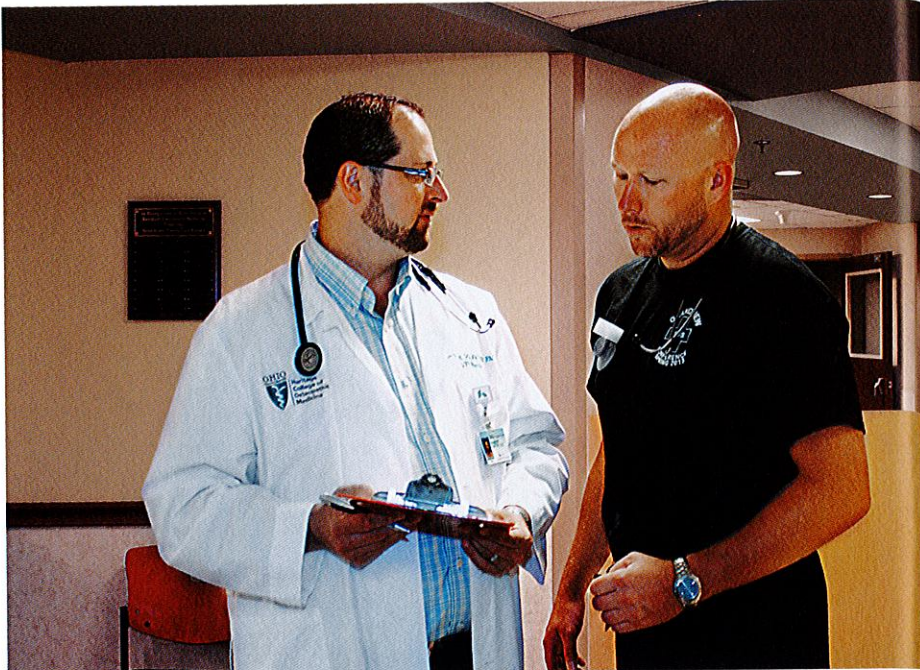
Wills. "I'll get texts and emails from him in the middle of the night asking about some legislative initiative, sharing an inspirational quote, providing input on association business — even when he's passing a kidney stone."

Hunter, who always has his iPhone nearby, actually texted Wills a photo of the kidney stone arrival during the District 8 (Akron-Canton) OOA Family Visit, a meeting Hunter begrudgingly missed due to his unanticipated, personal emergency. The technologically savvy doc regularly snaps photos at OOA, AOA, and OU-HCOM events to post to his Twitter account.

Despite the demanding schedule, Hunter is always ready to make time for his family. With four active children and wife Rachel, a physician assistant-certified, enrolled as a third year student at West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, the Hunter household is a busy one. "They are the most important part of my life," he said.

His patients are also a priority. To be a role model for them, he undertook a training routine and eats a healthy diet, helping him to lose weight.

Being a role model for his fellow members on the OOA Board of Trustees is also a priority — as is developing leaders in the Ohio profession. At the OOA Board of Trustees meeting in September he gave each member a copy of the best-selling book *The Leadership Challenge*, along with a personalized handwritten note. Hunter said the book



is meant to encourage and challenge future leaders to "make extraordinary things happen."

An expressive man with glasses and smiling blue eyes, Hunter brings passion to everything he does, whether it's rooting for Ohio State football, serving his patients, or leading his osteopathic colleagues.

Here are some of his thoughts on OOA, health care and his personal pursuits.

Association Action

How long have you been involved with the Ohio Osteopathic Association?

My association involvement started during residency at Grandview, when I was inspired to serve by Dayton leaders like Paul Martin, DO, and Barbara Bennett, DO. I was interested in preserving the osteopathic tradition and philosophy so I became active in the Dayton District Academy. I was elected to lead as Academy president and then to the OOA Board about 10 years ago, where I worked my way up the chairs.

What inspired your legislative involvement?

I became familiar with the AOA Health Policy Fellowship and knew some past Fellows. Since I already had an interest in legislation and policy, I saw the program as a good way to enhance my advocacy knowledge and skills. I applied, was accepted, and completed the program in 2010. I wrote health policy briefs on e-records and the Affordable Care Act.

Then I became involved in state and government issues. I served on former US Rep. Steve Austria's Health Policy Advisory Committee, and when my son Jordan and I visited the US Capitol we got to go down on the House floor. It was great to see the legislative process up close and first-hand. I've also worked with State Sen. Peggy Lehner and State Reps. Terry Johnson and Jim Butler, and I always try to attend AOA's DO Day on the Hill every spring in DC and the Health Policy Forum in the fall.

Why is this the Year of the Member?

First, we want to increase membership. The OOA is the collective voice of *all* DOs in the state so we want *all* DOs to belong. Whether they are active members who take on a leadership role or simply dues-paying ones, we need everyone to join to support our profession. It is our responsibility to move our profession forward and to promote the distinctive philosophy and practice of osteopathic medicine in Ohio. The OOA is the only organization in Ohio that represents DOs.

Another reason to increase our state membership rolls is because it makes an impact nationally. Seats on the AOA Board of Trustees and the most prestigious roles are based on numbers of DO members in each state. So the more AOA and OOA members we have in Ohio, the greater our visibility and influence nationally.

The "Year of the Member" also includes providing value to members. We have the new Practice Solutions Program, education and



WHAT MEMBERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ME

I want them to reach out to me if they have problems or concerns. They can call me any time or track me down through the OOA office. I'm here *because* of the membership and *for* the membership. I do this for them, there's no pay for it. I want to be their voice for Ohio. The Ohio profession has such an established history as leaders — even nationally. I want to continue and nurture that tradition. It's all about keeping our osteopathic profession distinct and on top.



CME, leadership development, communication to keep you up-to-date on important regulatory and legislative matters, and other tangible benefits. And advocacy, which I think is the most important benefit for members.

We're also looking at greater collaboration with OU-HCOM alumni who practice in Ohio. If they're not OOA members, why not? What can we do to bring them in. After all, the OOA is largely responsible for establishing the school. But more than that, their OOA membership helps OU-HCOM, too. I see a similar strategy for DOs at the 20 hospitals associated with the Centers for Osteopathic Research and Education. Their membership in the OOA ultimately benefits the hospital as well as the students and residents training there. It goes back to moving the osteopathic profession forward. It takes all of us.

What are the membership challenges?

It's really hard because DOs can be members of multiple organizations so they've almost become disenfranchised. You look at all of these dues you're paying and you start to cut back. So the OOA wants to stress what we're doing for DOs in the state and why it's important to belong.

In the past, a majority of DOs were part of a private group with other DOs and they practiced in osteopathic hospitals. Today, we have a different model. A lot of physicians are working in mixed staff and are just employees, either at a hospital or large group. There are limitations if the hospital will pay for membership. That could be why DOs step away. Now, as the professional home for all DOs in the state, the OOA is trying to come back and say 'there is a purpose.'

Issues that Matter

What are the top issues for the osteopathic profession right now, in your opinion?

Advocacy tops my list. Jon Wills lobbies at the Ohio Statehouse with other leaders in the profession to protect our rights to practice medicine. Every year the Ohio Legislature considers dozens of bills that govern the daily practice of medicine. So staying connected with legislators and policy leaders is a priority. Because if you're not sitting at the table, you're part of the meal, right?

PROFILE OF A PRESIDENT

Robert L. Hunter, DO, FACOF, FACOEP

Age: 43

Medical Education: West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, 1997

Post-Graduate Training: Grandview Hospital and Medical Center (Dayton) Family Medicine Residency 2000; Emergency Medicine Residency 2002

Family: Wife, Rachel; Children: Victoria 5, Jaxe 7, Kohle 8, Jordan 14

Specialty: Board-certified in Family Medicine and Emergency Medicine

Resides In: Beavercreek

Practice Location: Buckeye Family Practice in Huber Heights; Hospital affiliations with Kettering Medical Center, Grandview, Southview, Sycamore, Good Samaritan and Children's Medical Center

Professional Memberships: American Osteopathic Association, Ohio Osteopathic Association, American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOF), Ohio ACOFP, American Medical Directors Association, American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians, National Academy of Physicians, American Osteopathic Academy of Medical Informatics

Leadership: Past President of Ohio ACOFP; Past President of Dayton Academy of Osteopathic Medicine; Chair of State of Ohio Medicaid Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee; Trustee of American Osteopathic Association of Medical Informatics; Chief of Staff-elect at Grandview Hospital; Co-Chair of Ohio Osteopathic Political Action Committee; graduate of AOA Health Policy Fellowship; currently enrolled in ACOFP Physicians Leadership Institute, a 12-month program

Alumni Affairs: Listed in *Who's Who in Medicine and Health Care, West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine*, member of WVSOM Dean's Circle, Concord College Alumni Association

Twitter Handle: @RHunterHunter

We want to be the ones helping policy makers to understand that osteopathic medicine is a distinct profession. We want to make sure we have an identity.

As for specific topics, Medicaid expansion is on the table right now. The OOA has supported this effort. It's estimated that 250,000 to 300,000 Ohioans who do not have health insurance would get coverage with expansion. As an ER doctor I see it everyday. Uninsured patients use the most expensive access to get their health care.

We're also monitoring the Affordable Care Act and paying attention as to how it affects primary care. The law provides lots of benefits, no doubt, but we're watching how it's implemented. As part of the law, we have these new health insurance exchanges. Again, we're seeing what happens here in Ohio and want to make sure the end product is a benefit for physicians and patients.

Getting Personal

Who inspired you? How?

My Mom and Dad taught me that hard work pays off in the end. Professionally, Drs. Paul Martin, George Thomas and Robert Juhasz have helped me along the path to leadership with advice and guidance.

What is something we don't know about you professionally?

I'm finishing my Masters Degree in Public Health at A.T. Still University this year and I am the medical director at Hospice of Miami Valley.

What is something we don't know about you personally?

I was a coal miner before matriculating to WVSOM.

What OOA presidential legacy do you want to leave?

That I made a difference for the members and our patients.