



Historical Happenings

Newsletter of the Physician Assistant History Society

Message from the President



Maryann F. Ramos, MPH, PA-C
Emeritus

The three-year Strategic Plan that the PA History Society Trustees recently embraced is one that we can put into action in the next few years. I hope that the vision embodied in that plan will inspire our dedicated Trustees to sync those goals with our work to move the Society forward and make followers of the PA profession aware of our underpinnings as well as our future goals.

Our primary goal is to expand the PA History Society’s relevant historical holdings and make the amassed histories freely available to all PAs and PA students via the website. As mentioned in the Strategic Plan, our Trustees and Historians will focus on completing biographies of all past presidents and senior staff of the profession’s national organizations. Additionally, we plan to add biographies of those who have been leaders in introducing the profession: forward thinking physicians, educators, administrators and elected officials.

Oral histories are very popular with visitors to the PAHx website. The Society will continue to record the stories of leaders who are important to PA history. Those who led us to decisions and strategies are of utmost interest. You probably agree that hearing them in their own words has the greatest impact.

Another commendable goal of the Strategic Plan includes guiding efforts to disseminate historical information about the PA Profession. As PAHx Board President, I see great benefit in digitizing *Physician Assistant: An illustrated History* (2013). It will be available through Amazon.com later this month as an e-book. This book has been a PA mainstay to broadly understanding the profession’s founding, its growth, and its continuing development

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in providing medical care. Currently, the PAHx Book Task Force is evaluating a new book to be published by 2020. This is a logical step to updating history made as the profession grows.

I have enjoyed reading the variety of interesting PA articles that have been compiled in the online *JAAPA-JPAE 50th Anniversary* edition. I encourage all PAs to check out this special edition which is available on the [PAHx website](#).

As our Trustees continue to develop a two-day *PA Historian Boot Camp*, I hope PAs will plan to join us later this year in Johns Creek, GA for this exciting workshop. Please watch for more details about our AAPA Category 1 CME approved Boot Camp on the PAHx website.

(President’s Message, continued on page 2)

(President's Message, continued from page 1)

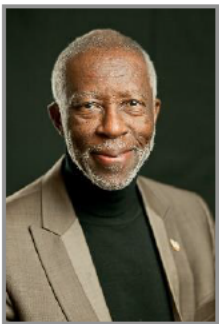
The Society's Trustees and Historians are available as part of our organization's Speakers' Bureau. I think that personally interacting with PA students via lectures, keynote speaking events for white coat ceremonies or graduation is very important. These engagements offer our best opportunities to introduce the historical works to PA students.

As a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization, we continue to develop new products and services that support our goals and provide us funding to fulfill our mission. In addition to the different levels of giving available for PA programs and constituent organizations as [PAHx Associates](#), the Society also encourages charitable giving by individuals through our "Friends of the Society" campaign. Individuals who donate \$100 or more are featured on the Society's website. And remember, all donations to the PA History Society are tax-deductible!

The AAPA Minority Affairs Committee: A Beginning for Sustainability

John J. Davis, PA-C

Part 1 of a series by Mr. Davis:



The passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which outlawed discrimination against black Americans, and the 1965 passage of the Medicare, Medicaid Acts, which prohibited federal funds from being dispensed to segregated hospitals, were major incentives to include minorities at all levels of medical training and delivery. Acknowledging these historic events, the AAPA created the Minority Affairs Committee (MAC). The first national MAC meeting was held in New Orleans at the AAPA's 1974 Annual Conference.

It all began in a broom closet; a closet located down a hallway, around a corner, away from most of

the other hotel traffic; a closet not built for people but for brooms, mops, cleaning rags, equipment and soaps. The odor of cleaning fluids, dirty mops and open detergent containers covered the closet like a molded blanket. One small dirt and oil stained grimy door served as our entrance to our first meeting space, no windows to determine day, night, rain or bright sunlight; no air-conditioning to alleviate the New Orleans blistering temperature. This unnamed, unnumbered closet was the MAC's first ever assigned meeting space, located in The Monteleone, a major meeting hotel.

Joyce Nichols, a founding member of the AAPA and a member of the AAPA Board, was appointed chairperson of the newly formed MAC. Ms. Nichols was also the first female graduate from a PA Program. Joyce, for those who met her, was a proud, beautiful black woman with spirit to match. She was at least 5'10" with skin the color of African volcanic soil, dark and smooth; hair that matched the roots of Acacia trees; a booming voice which she wielded at will - a voice that demanded attention. She was smart, empathetic, witty, Nichols and Steve Turnipseed a friend or foe for life.



Joyce had developed a good working relationship with the other organizers of the AAPA. She was well-aware of what needed to be done. She did not complain or voice wonderment about why this closet was our meeting place. The rest of us joked and laughed about it and the broom closet soon became our organizational "rally cry." We all knew that the MAC was something bigger than any one of us or the broom closet.

Joyce called the meeting to order. The room was quiet. Everyone was ready to see, hear and learn from everyone else. Members in the room included Molly Robinson, Earnestine Campbell, Percy Golson, Ruth Webb, Earl Echard, Steve Turnipseed and me.

(AAPA Minority Affairs Committee, continued on page 3)

(AAPA Minority Affairs Committee, continued from pg.2)

Our chair talked about her personal struggles, including living in public housing with her husband and children, before, during and after her graduation from the Duke PA Program. She told us about having to work part-time while attending PA classes part-time. She knew there were doubts by some about her ability to perform and to complete the program. However, she was proud to be speaking to us as a graduate PA and proud of her PA job, providing care to low-income patients in rural North Carolina.

Joyce used her personal struggles and prominent successes to instill in each of us the concept that we must become the caretakers of all people, not just the affluent. She stressed that we must be concerned not only about our financial benefits, but also be willing to address the issues of those less fortunate because that is what Dr. Eugene A. Stead (who developed the first PA program) and Dr. Richard Smith (who developed the first MEDEX program) would want us to do.

In the meeting everyone had an opportunity to speak. We talked about our lives leading up to our entry into the PA/MEDEX Programs. We discussed our struggles, successes, goals and objectives for the PA profession. We talked of families, friends and colleagues, as well as our patients back home.

We knew that to face the future successfully we needed to have goals. Goals require organization. Goals solidify an organization's purpose and direction. So, we began to realize our goals by organizing the Minority Affairs Committee membership and assigning specific duties and responsibilities. We elected a secretary, treasurer and membership committee. The goals of the MAC included increasing:

- minority participation in the MAC by sharing phone numbers and addresses.

- diverse applicants and graduates from each PA and MEDEX program.
- the voice of the MAC throughout the profession by members becoming active in their state and local chapters.

After several hours the meeting was adjourned. The energy was still too strong! No one left.

(Part 2 of Mr. Davis' series will appear in the next issue)



IN HER WORDS – Maryann Ramos, PAHx Board President

As you embark on your PAHx presidency, what ONE project are you most excited about?

I'm looking forward to having all physician assistants learn about PA history via the PAHx.org website. Dr. Eugene Stead, the physician with enlightened vision, noted that medics and corpsmen returning from Vietnam could alleviate the shortage of primary care providers. The focused medical education for PAs was based on the 3-year physicians' training during World War II. We see that PAs have become an integral part of the health care team for over 50 years. Providing that history allows everyone to understand the underpinnings of the profession.

Favorite part of being a PAHx Board of Trustee member?

Seeing other board members enjoy life while sharing their vision of PA history.

Favorite PA history memory?

Between 1977 and 1992, I spent many hours working on the adoption of the New Jersey PA Practice Act. I



visited state legislator offices, lobbied, marched and made speeches for the cause. I kept my fellow PAs psyched about the legislative urgency by performing skits at an AAPA House of Delegates meeting. Most remember me performing as Gilda Radner, the Saturday

Night Live character, Roseanne Rosanneadanna.

(In Her Own Words, continued on page 4)

POP QUIZ: DO YOU KNOW YOUR PA HISTORY?

Test your knowledge of PA history by answering this question:

Which of the following physicians used former military corpsmen and medics as their first recruits to be educated as physician assistants?

1. Henry Silver at the University of Colorado
2. Richard (Dick) Smith at the University of Washington
3. Hu Myers at Alderson-Broaddus College (now University)
4. Eugene A. Stead, Jr. at Duke University

- A. 1, 2, and 3.
- B. 1 and 3.
- C. 2 and 4.
- D. 4 only.
- E. 1, 2, 3, and 4

The answer is on page 6 of this newsletter.

Note: This question is one of many found in the [Educational Toolkit](#) modules that the PA History Society has produced to assist PA educational programs in fulfilling their obligation (as detailed in the in the ARC-PA Standards of Accreditation) "...to instruct their students in the PA profession, its historical development, and current trends..." The Toolkit is available to PAHx Associates. Learn more about the [Associate benefits here](#).

(In Her Own Words, continued from page 3)

In your volunteer career with the American Academy of PAs and various constituent organizations you served, what accomplishments please you the most?

I have four in which I was honored to participate:

- becoming the first Constituent Chapter President to obtain funding to lobby and educate state legislators

- serving as the first Liaison from AAPA to the physicians' organization, the American Occupational and Environmental Medicine (AOEM)
- obtaining AOEM Affiliate member status for PAs that provided them the opportunity to study OEM medical education
- identifying and helping alleviate medical care delivery problems due to the 2017 hurricane in Puerto Rico.

How old were you when you had your first paying job? What was it?

At 16 I was a camp counselor for a NYC area (Yorkville) summer camp in Bear Mountain, NY. I got honors for producing a musical by having my young students from many different countries sing their national anthems.

Of all your past jobs, what is your favorite?

Teaching law and history of the profession and acting as academic coordinator at City University of New York's Harlem Hospital PA Program is the highlight. The students were immensely dedicated to each other while working to learn the medical facts and learning to practice successfully in the community. One class went to Albany, NY, to convince lawmakers that PAs were the best thing for the communities they would serve, focused on knowing the culture and diversity of the neighborhoods they would choose.

If you could change ONE thing about your life, what would that be?

I wish I could have been better able to help my husband quit smoking. Neither I nor physicians could prevent his nicotine addiction and had to watch him succumb to lung cancer at age 68.

What do you want to be when you grow up?

I think I've almost figured that out. I'd like to volunteer to help in disasters (I have belonged to the Medical Reserve Corps since 2002 in Arlington, VA and Greenwich, CT). Besides that, I'd like to join singing groups that entertain seniors at nursing homes and senior centers by singing songs from their youth.

(In Her Own Words, continued on page 5)

(In Her Own Words, continued from page 4)

Finally, I'd like to share summers on sailboats with friends. I belong to a sailing club where we share a week or long weekends aboard and sail the Long Island Sound.

Favorite pastime? Listening to singing, or playing music

Favorite type of music? Jazz and Broadway tunes

Favorite musical performer? Michele Grace (my vocal teacher)

Favorite food? Pasta, with other Southern Italian accompaniments

How would you describe yourself in ONE word?
Activist

If I were to say to your close friends, give me THREE adjectives that best describe you, what would I hear? Enthusiastic, energetic, ambitious

What ONE thing about you would surprise the readers? That I play the drums

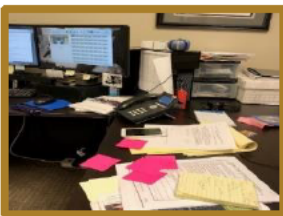
Favorite personal quote? "Make me a channel of your peace." (Prayer of St. Francis)

Become A PA Historian:

How to Save, Study and Share the story of PAs, our History, and Legacy

Learn how to take your historical paperwork from this:

To this:



The PA History Society will present a 2-day *PA Historian Boot Camp*, which has been reviewed and is approved for a maximum of 12 AAPA Category 1

CME credits. If you have a passion for PA history, please plan to join us later this year!

Participants will learn how to:

- ✓ Organize and preserve historical documents
- ✓ Attain archival skills for research and study
- ✓ Become an advocate for PA history and the profession
- ✓ Develop techniques to creatively write, speak and share the history of your institution and the PA profession

The Boot Camp will be held at the PA History Society office in Johns Creek, GA (just north of Atlanta).



Check the [PAHx website](#) and our Social Media for further details in the coming months!

PAs, All That and a Bag of Chips – *PA History in the 90s*

Michelle Schabowski, MSIS

The 1990s was a pretty fly decade. It saw the number of PA programs more than double. PA programs offering master's instead of bachelor's degrees increased, and, for the first time, women were now the majority of PA program applicants. Woman Power!

Other notable milestones of the 90s:

- 1991
 - The Student Academy Challenge Bowl is founded.
 - The first clinical journal targeting PAs and NPs, *Clinician Reviews*, is published.
- 1992
 - The US Army and Coast Guard PAs are commissioned, meaning all the armed services now allow PAs to be commissioned.

(PA History in the 90s, continued on page 6)

(PA History in the 90s, continued from page 5)

- 1993
 - NCCPA administers the pilot test for Pathway II, a recertification exam that is an alternative to the proctored PA National Recertifying Exam (PANRE).
- 1994
 - The first formal textbook for PA education, *Physician Assistants: A Guide to Clinical Practice*, is published.
 - AAPA is granted observer status in the AMA's House of Delegates.
- 1995
 - The Association of Physician Assistant Programs, APAP, (now PAEA) establishes PATH (Program Assistance and Technical Help) to give guidance to new and developing PA programs.
- 1996
 - APAP develops PACKRAT (PA Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool) for students. It is a self-assessment exam to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses.
 - The military services combine their PA programs to form the Interservice Physician Assistant Program (IPAP).
- 1997
 - The Balanced Budget Act of 1997, for the first time, recognizes PAs as covered providers in all settings at a uniform pay rate.
 - The NCCPA redesigns the PA National Certifying Exam (PANCE), doing away with the clinical skills problems. It also eliminates the extended core components in primary care and surgery.

- 1998
 - *Perspective on PA Education* becomes the official peer-reviewed journal of APAP (now PAEA).
 - The NCCPA starts requiring PAs to pass the recertifying exam within two tries.
 - APAP establishes the Faculty Development Institute to provide oversight to all APAP-sponsored faculty development activities.
- 1999
 - The NCCPA administers the National Certifying Examination (PANCE) by computer for the first time. Computer-based examinations soon becomes the norm.
 - APAP releases GRADRAT (Graduate Rating and Assessment Tool) to help certified PAs prepare for the PANRE.

And, not in the 90s decade, but too awesome not to mention, in 2000 Mississippi finally passes legislation allowing PAs to practice within the state, meaning that now all 50 of the United States allow PAs to practice!



Stay in Touch with PAHx thru Social Media!

Please be sure to “like” PA History Society on [Facebook](#) to receive updates and follow us on [Twitter](#). Check out the Society’s [Blog](#).

POP QUIZ: Answer

Correct Answer to the PA History Pop Quiz: C

Eugene Stead, MD, developed a two-year academic-based Physician Assistant Program at Duke University in 1965; Richard Smith, MD, developed a joint academic/community-based MEDEX Program at the University of Washington in 1968. Both used former military corpsmen and medics as their first recruits for training. Henry Silver's first students were primarily nurses. Hu Myers's first students were four-year liberal art students, some with and some without prior health care experience.

PAs on the Alaska Pipeline

Ruth Ballweg, MPA, PA-C Emeritus

PA History Society Historian

The Trans-Alaska Pipeline, built by the Alyeska Corporation, captivated the American public and provided a highly visible stage for utilization of PAs in challenging, remote occupational medicine settings. Alyeska—which, in the Aleut language means “mainland”—was founded as a new company in 1970 for the sole purpose of building an efficient and safe pipeline to transport oil over 800 miles from Prudhoe Bay—the North Slope location where oil was first discovered in 1968—to the ice-free deep-water port in Valdez Alaska on Prince William Sound.

The 800-mile pipeline, now known as TAPS (Trans-Alaska Pipeline System), crosses three mountain ranges and more than 30 major rivers and streams. Built between 1974 and 1977, the pipeline employed thousands of people during its construction and continues to employ large numbers of regular employees (deployed for multiple week assignments on the slope) as well as short term workers from elsewhere in the U.S.

Throughout its construction, the pipeline received regular and enthusiastic news coverage largely because it was a major engineering feat with considerable challenges along the way. Alaska—and the pipeline—signified “the last frontier” to people everywhere. There was great

interest in knowing more about the people who had signed on to meet the unpredictable demands and creativity requirements that were required of pipeline workers. One major solution to the potential workforce problems was a decision to hire U.S. military personnel—including Corpsmen and PAs returning from the controversial Vietnam War. To this day, former pipeline employees maintain a website and contact list for veterans who also “served” on the pipeline.

PA students with prior military medical experience were just breaking into Alaska through the support of the MEDEX Northwest Program, which sent seven members of Class 4 to be “the first PAs in Alaska.” The MEDEX agreement was a part of the federally funded Alaska Health Manpower Corporation and included clinical placements in rural Alaska communities and a strategy to develop jobs and PA regulation in the state.

As the pipeline plans developed, The Bechtel Company, the large construction firm based in San Francisco, was the prime contractor for the project and, included with the many responsibilities, was the medical coverage for the project. They hired Dr. Jonathan Wainwright, MD as Medical Director to head up clinical development and manpower recruitment for the pipeline. Although it's difficult to tell what influenced his decision, he was determined to hire an assistant with specific qualifications:

1. Be a certified Physician Assistant
2. Have administrative experience
3. Have knowledge and experience in the field of medical supply
4. Be a legal resident of the state of Alaska

(PAs on the Alaskan Pipeline, continued on page 8)

All things PA History can be found on our website at www.pahx.org!

(PAs on the Alaskan Pipeline, continued from page 8)

Dr. Wainwright hired George Randall of MEDEX Class 4 as Medical Administrator for the Pipeline. He wrote about his experience in the September 1997 issue of "PA News-Line":

"It seemed that everything was needed yesterday. Bechtel informed me that they intended to get several fly camps (temporary construction sites for the purpose of constructing the permanent camps) established within two weeks and would need medical coverage for these. I was also told that there would be 25 construction camps as well as 12 pump stations along the 800-mile pipeline route from Prudhoe Bay (site of the wells) to Valdez, the terminus. The service road and construction camps were being built at a rapid pace so it was a real challenge to get the clinics equipped and staffed with a PA in a timely manner. The PAs assigned to the camps and pump stations were placed in a very responsible as well as difficult situation. They were required to be on call 24-hours a day for eight weeks. Unlike the other workers in the camp, they were not allowed to drink alcohol. They were truly on independent duty as the camps were hundreds of miles from any MD. However, besides Dr. Wainwright, there were two other MDs in the office in Fairbanks to give telephone advice. The kinds of cases presented to the camp PAs ranged from minor to severe trauma, heart attacks, pneumonia, acute appendicitis, skin rashes and burns along with all the myriad complaints presented in any family practice. It also should be noted that there were many female employees in the camps, so the PAs also treated gynecological complaints as well. Some of the female workers were happy to be seen by one of our three female PAs. Among the more than 150 PAs hired on the pipeline project, it was only necessary to

discharge three of them for cause, one for leaving her camp for several hours to take a helicopter ride, and the other two for being under the influence of alcohol. Both offenses were understood at hiring to be big "no-nos" and cause for immediate dismissal."

Randall also wrote his own book of history and memories of PAs on the pipeline called *Don't Call Me Doctor* in 1997.

In the December 2013 *JAAPA* article, *A History of the Alaska Physician Assistant, 1970-1980*, written by retired PA Joseph Marzucco, he states: "The time was serendipitous for PAs as a recession was under way in the Lower 48 [states] and PAs were clamoring for jobs in various parts of the country. The enticement to work a few months in Alaska, then take a paid furlough back home with a paid round trip was alluring. Each of the pipeline's 25 construction camps and 12 pumping stations was supposed to have a dispensary and be serviced periodically by a clinician (physician, PA, or paramedic). At least 20 PAs were recruited initially."

Pipeline PAs were recognized and honored in the Veterans Caucus portion of the annual AAPA Conference in Salt Lake City in 1998.



AAPA Conference, 1998
Dr. Jim Warrick and Neal O'Callaghan, PA-C

PA practice continues to be a mainstay of health care and safety on the Alaska pipeline. The difficulty in finding first person accounts as well as documents and photos relative to PA practice on the pipeline is another good example of history that needs to be collected and retained while these "pipeline PAs" are still around. This—and others like it—are perfect examples of PA history work that can be carried out by PA historians at the local or institutional level.

Support PA History by becoming a *PAHx Associate!*

With your paid annual PAHx Educational Research Fee, Associates have access to these exclusive benefits:

- online *Educational Toolkit with learning modules and test questions*
- online *Historian Toolkit*
- online *Toolkit of Exhibit Materials* (formerly the 50th Anniversary Toolkit)
- recognition in a monthly feature on the PAHx website *home page*
- PAHx Speakers Bureau
- PAHx digital images free-of-charge.
- recognition on the PAHx website *Associates page*
- featured photograph of your first graduating class

Associates also receive a digital seal to proudly display your support of the PA History Society on your program or organization's website. The PAHx Associate benefits are effective from July 1 – June 30 each year. For more information on becoming a PAHx Associate, please visit the Society's website at <https://pahx.org/how-to-support-us/> or email us at contactus@pahx.org.

PAHx Thanks our 2017-2018 Associates:



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Scribe \$250 - \$499

Anne Arundel Community College - Concordia University - D'Youville College - Evansville, University of Gannon University - Grand Valley State University - Mary Baldwin University - King's College - Mount St. Joseph University - Northern Arizona University - Oklahoma City University - Rutgers School of Health Professionals - Saint Francis University - Saint Louis University - Seton Hall University - Shenandoah University - University of Mount Union - Touro College, Bayshore - Trevecca Nazarene University - University of Oklahoma - University of North Texas Health Science Center - University of Texas Southwestern

(PAHx Associates, continued on page 8)

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(PAHx Associates, continued from page 7)

In addition, *individuals* may support the PAHx by becoming a “**Friend**” of the Society with a \$100 or more annual donation. The “Friends” of the Society are also listed on the PAHx website.

Many Thanks to our 2017-2018 Friends of the Society:



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A colorful 24” x 36” special edition poster ready to be framed and featured in your clinic, office, classroom, medical library, etc.



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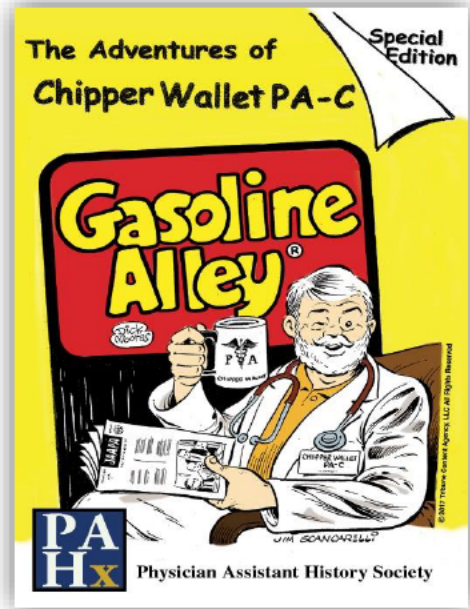


Show your PA pride with this special edition lapel pin commemorating the profession's golden anniversary. Perfect to wear on your white coat!

For more information or to order any of our special commemorative anniversary gifts, please visit the PAHx website, or email us at: contactus@pahx.org

The Adventures of Chipper Wallet, PA-C

Chipper Wallet is a character from the nationally syndicated comic strip, *Gasoline Alley*. In 1968, Chipper Wallet joined the Navy, became a hospital corpsman, and was sent to Vietnam. When he came home in the early 1970s, he joined one of the early Physician Assistant programs on the advice of the town doctor. Chipper Wallet is credited for being one of the major influences in pop culture that brought the PA profession to the attention of the public. Chipper Wallet has a fond place in the hearts of many pioneering PAs as his journey to become a PA mirrors their own.



Comic Books are \$10 each, plus shipping

Quantity: _____ x \$10 + \$3.00 shipping *

**A single comic book purchase is \$10 + \$3 for shipping = \$13.00*

If you are purchasing multiple comic books, please email the office at contactus@pahx.org before placing your order or submitting payment to receive the correct shipping amount.

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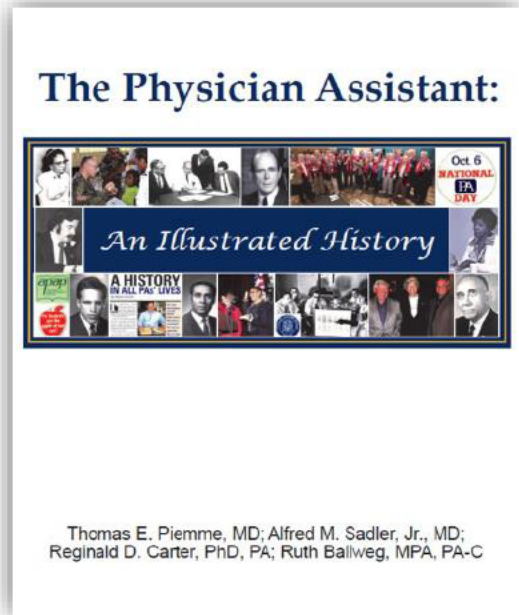
The Physician Assistant: *An Illustrated History*

A concise history of the people, places, and events that have propelled the concept of the PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT from its inception at Duke University in 1965 to its position as a major force in American medicine today.

Special Pricing for PA Programs, PAs and Constituent Organizations:

\$12 each (retail price \$15.95)

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***A single book purchase is \$12 + \$2.75 for shipping = \$14.75**

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