

Historical Happenings

Newsletter of the PA History Society



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Message from the President

Stephen D. Wilson, PA-C



I look forward to the fall as much as any season. Of course, the weather is changing and often very comfortable if not invigorating. The plants have completed their cycle and now is the time to clean them up and prepare them for the cold of winter and their expected growth in the spring. As exhibited in our November Board meeting, I think organizations often do much of the same. It was a time for welcoming new leaders, to review our success for the year and to gauge the progress of our long-range plan.

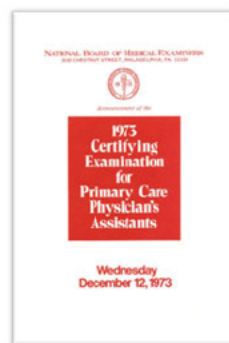
(Continued on Page 3)

50th Anniversary of the First Certifying Examination for Primary Care PAs

By Reginald D. Carter, PhD, PA

On December 12, 1973, 880 candidates took the first certifying examination for “assistants to the primary care physician” administered by the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME). Sixty-two percent (62%) of the candidates received their training in PA programs, 29% in MEDEX training programs and 9% in nurse practitioner programs. The exam consisted of multiple-choice questions and patient management problems using latent image technology

to expose pertinent information.¹ The announcement sent out to eligible candidates listed the functions that the primary care PA should “definitely be skilled in performing.” Thirty-eight test centers were established primarily at PA program sites throughout the United States.²



(Continued on Page 4)

**In His Own Words: Greg Thomas,
PA-C Emeritus, MPH, DFAAPA,
PAHx Trustee**

*By Bruna Varalli-Claypool, BBA, MHS,
PA-C, DFAAPA*



During your career, you were the “first” or “only” PA on many national committees. What advice do you have for early career PAs regarding advocating for the profession?

The world of healthcare has changed dramatically since my early years in the profession. Back then, there was little awareness of PAs

and so it was exciting to be the sole PA, and I enjoyed the opportunity to educate diverse groups about the profession. My advice today is the same and that is to “raise your hand” when an opportunity arises. Just being part of any discussion, whether it’s at your place of employment or your neighborhood association, provides an excellent chance to advocate for PAs.

How do you listen to music? Vinyl or download?

No vinyl in the house, so it’s all download. My taste in music is pretty tame and is mainly classical and jazz. Although a professional musician once commented that great music should never be used as “wallpaper,” I must admit that I enjoy just having music on in the background.

What’s your favorite food?

Unfortunately, there isn’t much food that I don’t enjoy, but my favorite would be Asian ... especially Thai.

(Continued on page 7)

**The Importance of Audible Memory:
Seeking COVID-19 Mini Interviews**

By Michelle Schabowski, MSIS, CA

“I believe that in each of us there is a small piece of history.”

*~Svetlana Alexievich,
War’s Unwomanly Face*

The PA History Society would like to start collecting “short story” interviews for a collection of oral histories about PAs and the COVID-19 Pandemic. If you or a PA you know has a story or wants to share an aspect of how their practice was impacted by the pandemic, please let us know! Topics we would especially be interested in are:

- How COVID-19 affected the way you practice as a PA
- The way your practice shifted to or became more reliant on telemedicine
- Unique experiences during the pandemic, i.e. volunteer work, etc.
- “Frontline” experiences at the start of the pandemic
- How the pandemic affected your PA program (either as an instructor or as a student)
- Memorable patient encounters during the pandemic

After editing, the interviews will be 5-10 minutes in length. All interviews will be conducted through Zoom and interview questions will be sent to you in advance of the scheduled interview time. Also, once the interview is edited, it will not be posted on our website or entered into our archives until we have your approval of the finished product!

If you would rather forgo the interviewer/interviewee format, we would be willing to accept a submission of a self-recorded video of yourself sharing your story.

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(President's Message continued from page 1)

I would first like to introduce our two new Board members. Dr. Randy Danielsen is a PA-C Emeritus well known in our history. He is currently Professor & Director of the Doctor of Medical Science Program in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies at the Arizona School of Health Sciences. With a career that began in 1974, his curriculum vitae is much too grand to reproduce on this page. He has distinguished himself as a clinician, educator, writer, editor, and leader of the profession.

Our new Student Trustee, Alec Williams, is currently a second year PA student at Quinnipiac University. As a member of the AAPA Student Academy Delegation this year, he was selected as their Chief Delegate. He saw HP-3640 reaffirmed into the AAPA Policy Manual, which reasserted the AAPA's commitment to encouraging PAs and their organizations to actively engage in the PA History Society's mission of studying and preserving the history of the profession. He believes that as the profession continues to evolve, it is an advantage to be well informed in the present about our past struggles and successes.

Our latest resource book, ["Physician Assistants as Social Innovators in Healthcare"](#), continues to receive great reviews, and we continue to see its usefulness in not only documenting our past but giving vision to our future. In an effort to better serve the needs of PA educators the Society's new long-range plan includes efforts to upgrade the teaching modules available to our constituent and Associate program members. Specifically, to address the ARC-PA curriculum requirements, link the new modules to the book in a dynamic way, and provide a more interactive platform. While capturing the essential history components, the modules will also allow those interested in learning more to delve into detailed history through links to our website and book references.

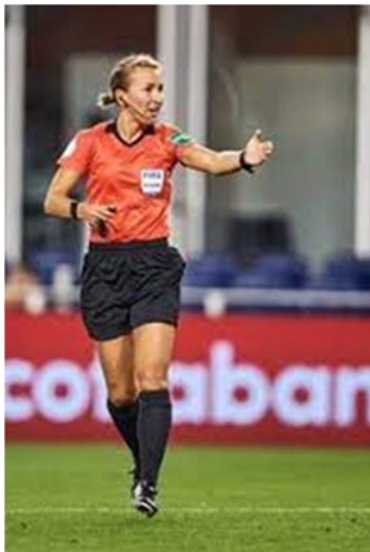
Speaking of our website (www.PAHx.org), I hope you have had the opportunity to check out the significant restructure, making the site easier to navigate and more interesting to read. Whether finding inspiration from the written biographies and oral histories, seeing how PAs met the challenges of COVID, or wondering what opportunities may await you internationally, the site is prepared to meet your curiosity.

This is my last message to you as President. The last two years have really transpired too quickly, but I look back with satisfaction as to what the organization has accomplished. We often note that the PAHx Trustees are part of a "working" board and none have worked harder to meet the demands and innovation of the Society than those that worked with me during and before my presidency. Couple their enthusiasm with the dedicated work of our staff and you can be proud of how the Society honors our profession through recognition of our past, our present and our future history.



Thriving on Adrenaline in Dual Careers: Katja Koroleva, PA-C

By Stephen D. Wilson, PA-C



If you were watching the Women's World Cup England vs Columbia match in August, you may have found yourself rewinding the telecast when the play-by-play announcer identified referee Katja Koroleva as a PA. She was working her second World Cup appearance in Australia/New Zealand after making her debut at the 2019 World Cup

in France. She has managed both professions with great enthusiasm and success. Koroleva was introduced to the PA community in 2022 in an AAPA Central article.

Though born in Russia, Koroleva's parents moved to Denmark and then Iowa City, Iowa in order to give her better opportunities. While playing for her high school and club soccer teams, Koroleva enrolled in and successfully completed a referee training program at the age of 16. Her goal was to only help pay her club fees so she could continue to play soccer. She worked in the summer refereeing under-13 leagues and soon was assigned to officiate high school, college, and adult leagues. She was recognized for both her skill as a referee and as a player. By age 18, she was honored by the Iowa Referee Committee and Iowa Soccer Association as Iowa's 2004 Female Youth Referee of the Year. Koroleva went on to play soccer at Coe College in Cedar Rapids and continued to improve her referee skills. It turned out that soccer was not her only interest.

(Continued on page 6)

(50th Anniv. Of Certifying Exams Continued from page 1)

The process of developing the examination began in April 1972, when the NBME accepted the recommendation of its Committee on Goals and Priorities. They did so reasoning that "physician's assistants are being trained in increased numbers and are becoming a significant component of the health care delivery system."³ This was the first time the NBME developed an examination that was not for medical students and physicians. The NBME was a natural choice to develop the examination since it had "developed considerable medical and psychometric resources and experience." An advisory committee was appointed, a "role delineation study" undertaken, and task forces created to refine components and construct a blueprint for test committees that created the substance of the examination. Edmund D. Pellegrino, MD, Vice President for Health Affairs, State University of New York, chaired the Advisory Committee.³ John P. Hubbard, MD, President of the NBME, asked Barbara J. Andrew, PhD, to direct the project.⁴

In August of 1974, 14 national organizations, including the NBME, came together to form the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). Over time, the NCCPA assumed responsibility for the development, administration, and analysis of the national PA certifying examination.

References:

- The National Board Examiner. Examination for Physician's Assistants (March 1974). Available at [Document | Examination for Physician's Assistants \[The National Board Examiner, March 1974\] | ID: 5d86p030t | MEDSpace \(duke.edu\)](#).
- National Board of Medical Examiners. Certifying examination for primary care physician's assistants (December 12, 1973). Available at [Document | Certifying examination for primary care physician's assistants | ID: cc08hf65b | MEDSpace \(duke.edu\)](#).
- National Board of Medical Examiners and Association of Physician Assistant Programs. Statement concerning the development of the national certifying examination for assistants to the primary care physician (August 1, 1973). Available at [Document | Statement concerning the development of the national certifying examination for assistants to the primary care physician | ID: 7s75dc44n | MEDSpace \(duke.edu\)](#).
- PA History Society. Biography, Barbara J. Andrew, Ph.D (May 2015). Available at [Andrew, Barbara J. – Physician Assistant History Society@ \(pahx.org\)](#).

Capturing PA History: PA Programs

By Tricia Marriott, PAHx Historian

Coinciding with PA Week 2023, the Yale University Physician Associate Program celebrated its 50-year anniversary of the first graduating class in New Haven, CT, October 6-7, 2023. The event was well attended and, by all accounts, a big success. As a graduate of the Class of '86, it was my honor to participate as a speaker on the topic of PA Advocacy & Leadership, topics near and dear to my heart and my PA career. The changes that have occurred for the profession in legislation and licensure, laws and regulation, scope of practice, reimbursement, PA education and the sheer number of PAs are tremendous with no end in sight. Which brings me to the point of this article; capturing the past 50 years as well as the next 50 years to come.



The mission of the PA History (PAHx) Society is to preserve events and stories important to the development of the profession, including the evolution of our PA programs. Programs that are celebrating 50 years, or have already done so, are listed on the [PAHx website](#). With over 300 programs in operation, and reportedly many more in the pipeline, the Society must rely on the program faculty and students to capture their history.

(Continued on page 9)

Online Newspaper and Magazine Clippings as Primary Source Material

by Reginald Carter, PhD, PA



DR. GEORGE STEVENSON, ROGER WHITTAKER
A jury rejected two charges, found them guilty of another

Digitized copies of historic newspapers make it easy to find primary source material, but there is something about original newspaper and magazine clippings

found in personal papers that broadens one's perceptions about the individuals who collected them. We have such clippings in our PA History Society Archives. For example, Roger Whittaker's papers contain materials concerning his trial in

the court case *Whittaker vs Shasta County, California*. These clippings were a valuable resource for an article titled [People v Whittaker: The Trial and Its Aftermath in California](#). Whittaker's collection also contains AAPA newsletters, newspaper clippings on Whittaker's career and his obituary. Steve Joyner's papers contain a scrapbook with newspaper clippings describing his role as the first PA to work in a solo general practice setting with Dr. Elliott Dixon of Ayden, NC and later as the first PA to become a director of an organ procurement agency. These clippings were used to write his [biography](#).

Newspaper and magazine clippings can be an invaluable resource of supplemental material for historical research. They provide a snapshot of the past, the cultural norms at the time and the understanding of current events as they unfolded. Used creatively, they can enliven the historian's story of the person or event being told.

(Katya Koroleva continued from page 4)



Early on, Koroleva developed an interest in medicine through her mother, Irina Koroleva, PhD; a geneticist and molecular biologist. Koroleva considered medical school but realized that the career would not be compatible with her love of soccer.

She prepared to become a pharmacist and interned with pharmacies during the summer, but decided she wanted to be more involved with the decision-making accompanying patient care. Koroleva's research of professions set her on the path to becoming a PA. She completed her studies at Coe College and then pursued her medical science degree at Salus University, becoming a certified PA in 2011. She made her professional debut as a professional referee two years later.

After graduation, Koroleva saw emergency medicine as her preferred area of patient care. She has been quoted as saying that "The ER was incredibly attractive to me because of shift work and the fast-paced environment [being] the same as refereeing: You make decisions and continue." There was also a constant reliance on teamwork, another trait Koroleva learned first on a soccer field. Throughout her early career, she said she reveled in the fast pace of working in emergency rooms: the adrenaline rush, assessing and making decisions quickly and accurately, the unrelenting pressure that she acknowledges "is not for everyone," and people depending on her to deliver with so much at stake. She watched the pandemic develop from inside the emergency room at Regional Medical Center in San Jose. During the early days of the virus' rapid spread, the hours were long and the pace grueling, both physically and emotionally.

But as much as the ED's shift-work nature freed up time to officiate games, Koroleva felt

seeing patients remotely as a better option. She connected with Convergence Telehealth as an option compatible with her desire to continue to have an impact in soccer and patient care.

Koroleva's work as a PA-C did not slow down her desire to be an international soccer referee. She punched all the tickets necessary until she finally received her FIFA badge in 2014. Her subsequent training and work on the field led to being named as a FIFA Women's World Cup 2019 referee. That journey was described in a FIFA press release: The referees selected for the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup, the most important competition in women's sport, have demonstrated their skills at previous tournaments, including the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup Jordan 2016 and Uruguay 2018, as well as the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup in Papua New Guinea in 2016 and this summer in Brittany, France.

Koroleva's accomplishments are best summed up in her own words: "Sports is an important part of our life... but life, ultimately, is the most important. There is no sport above life." We can expect to see her contribution to patient care out-distance her career as an international referee.

Images:

First 2 individual photos, courtesy of AAPA; 3rd image courtesy of Concarcaf

References:

<https://www.aapa.org/news-central/2021/08/pa-soccer-referee-finds-work-life-balance/>

<https://bleacherreport.com/articles/2891369-womens-soccer-ref-katja-koroleva-working-as-physician-assistant-amid-covid-19>

<https://www.concacaf.com/news/concacaf-referee-ekaterina-koroleva-on-the-frontlines-against-covid-19/>

[Way to go, Katja! | Arkansas State Soccer \(arkansassoccer.org\)](http://Way%20to%20go.%20Katja!%20|%20Arkansas%20State%20Soccer%20(arkansassoccer.org))

[Katja Koroleva: The professional referee's battle against COVID-19 as a physician assistant | MLSSoccer.com](https://www.mlsoccer.com/news/katja-koroleva-the-professional-referees-battle-against-covid-19-as-a-physician-assistant)



Our Website has had a “Facelift”!



Don't forget to check out the [Society's new website](https://www.PAHx.org).

Our content is updated regularly so visit our site often for 'all things PA history', including:

- 341 inspiring biographies
- 248 oral history interviews
- 179 videos
- 2,500 photographs

www.PAHx.org

(In His Own Words continued from page 2)

What's the last movie you saw in a theater?

I'm kind of embarrassed to admit it, but it was Barbie. I will point out that it was my mother-in-law's choice but ... 😊



What are you currently binge watching?

My husband Dan and I really enjoy British police shows and have just finished the final episodes of Inspector Lewis, which is actually the 3rd series based on related characters. We just started Lessons in Chemistry on Apple TV, which seems like it will be good.

What are your plans as you begin your second year as a PA History Society Trustee?

I will continue to explore ways to be more involved. I think we still have a long way to go in terms of increasing visibility of the organization, even among PAs.

Favorite vacation?

Favorite most recent vacation was a Rhine River cruise preceded by a week in Switzerland earlier this year. All time favorite was a safari in Kenya and Tanzania many, many years ago.



Dan Reichard & Greg Thomas
Gondola Ride, Switzerland, 2023

When did you decide that the PA profession was for you?

That's a complicated question for me, but the simple answer is my senior year in college. A nurse with whom I was working told me about this program she knew at Baylor College of Medicine!

Next book you'll read?

I'm currently hooked on a series of books by Richard Osman, which focus on a group of four characters with very diverse backgrounds who live in a retirement community in England. They refer to themselves as the "Thursday Murder Club." The books are really fun to read with mystery and plenty of great humor.



(Seeking COVID-19 Stories continued from page 2)

Before sending us the video, please reach out to us first so we can verify that your experiences meet our criteria for the collection and if we have any additional information we would like shared in your story.

Oral histories are important as they give personal experiences and “real-life” snapshots of historical events. These interviews bring events and eras to life from a personal perspective.

The COVID-19 pandemic will unarguably have shaped this current generation of PAs

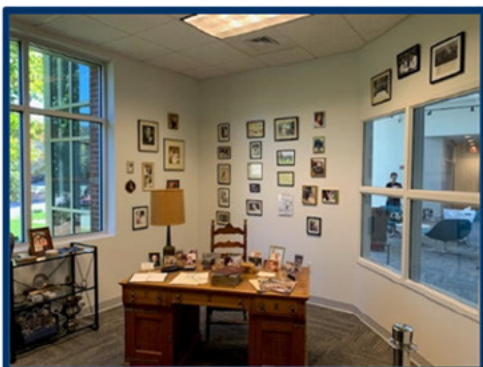
and we will be feeling its repercussions for years to come. As such, the PA History Society feels it imperative that we collect these stories to capture an accurate portrayal of events and experiences for future PAs and healthcare providers.

If you would like to see our other oral history interview collections, please see below:

- [PAs and the HIV/AIDS Epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s](#)
- [Medics and Corpsmen](#)
- [The PA Profession in the Netherlands](#)

The Stead Center Offices Receive a Refresh

Have you visited the Stead Center recently? This summer the North Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants (NCAPA) headquarters in Durham, NC, was given a fresh new look. The NCAPA office, also referred to as the Stead Center, is named after the founder of the PA profession, Dr. Eugene A. Stead, Jr. The PA History Society has several displays at the Stead Center including a replica of Dr. Stead’s lake home office, a reflections wall honoring the profession’s military roots, shadow boxes and display cabinets featuring the founding members and notable PA events from the past 56 years. The Stead Center is home to the Society’s PA Veterans Garden featuring the life-size medic statue titled [“Life Savers Then ... Care Givers Now”](#) with over 300 engraved brick pavers honoring PAs who have, or are currently serving our country, in the military and uniformed services. You can take a virtual tour of the Society’s collections at the [Stead Center here](#). The virtual tour is hosted by PAHx Co-Founder [Reginald D. Carter, PhD, PA](#). The NCAPA welcomes guests to visit the Stead Center in-person by appointment. If you’re going to be in the Durham area and would like to stop by, please call the NCAPA at 919-479-1995 before you visit.



(PA Programs continued from page 5)

Unlike the early days of the profession, the recent omnipresence of cellphones and the obsession with social media does mean that key moments and events inevitably have been captured for perpetuity. Unfortunately, those moments often reside in our devices and are not shared for historical documentation and preservation.

Fear not, the PAHx Society has resources for our [Associate members](#) that provide ideas and direction for PA programs interested in preserving their history. Annual sponsorship of the Society is open to PA Educational Programs and PA Student Organizations, but also to PA State Chapters, PA Caucuses, PA Specialty Groups, and corporate, philanthropic, and governmental sponsors. The sponsorship fees received by a PA educational institution or a PA organization are used to provide historical data and support to the institution in helping them educate their students and members on the history of the PA profession. Each organization is encouraged to name a Historian who will serve as a representative to the Society to enhance communications. Don't know if your organization is an Associate? [Check here](#).

Associate Benefits include:

- Educational Learning Modules, Instructor's Manual, and Test Questions for each module,
- Historian Toolkit,
- Celebration and Event Planner,
- Access to PAHx Speakers Bureau,
- Access to digital images free of charge,
- Featured on PAHx Website, First Class Picture Page, and PAHx Associates Page.

Organizations interested in learning about preserving their organization's PA history might also consider attending the PAHx Small Interactive Session "**Become a PA Historian - Preserving PA History**" at the AAPA 2024 Annual Conference in Houston scheduled for 5/21/2024 2:00-3:00 PM.

At the PAHx Society, we look forward to archiving photos and stories of both established programs and developing programs. We continue archiving the many photos of student activities and White Coat and Commencement ceremonies that we know are hidden in student cellphones, Facebook, and Instagram pages.

Special Activities During the PAHx's November Board Meeting



Earlier this month, the Trustees met in Atlanta for their fall Board meeting. During their workshop session, Trustees began outlining revisions to the Society's current Educational Learning Modules, which faculty use to teach students the history of the PA profession. Among the changes proposed, the updated modules will be tagged to the ARC-PA B2 Standards and to the content from the Society's book, [*PA's as Social Innovators in Healthcare*](#).

(PA Programs continued from page 10)

(PAHx Nov. Board Meeting continued from page 9)

PAHx President [Steve Wilson](#) concludes his officer service at the end of 2023 and President-Elect Robert Smith presented Steve with his coveted PAHx Past President Lapel Pin.



The Trustees recognized Student Trustee [Sophi Scarneman](#) for her service this year and the contributions she made to the Society's biography and oral history collections. President Steve Wilson presented Sophi with a personalized appreciation plaque. The Trustees wish Sophi all the best as she starts her career as a certified PA and begins making her own PA history!



**PA WEEK 2023:
PHOTO CHALLENGE**

This year during PA week, the Society asked students to email a photo of themselves at their PA Program. All photos received were posted to a special PAHx webpage, which you can view at:

www.pahx.org

At the end of PA week, five student names were placed into a random computerized drawing from all photos received. A special PA History gift pack was mailed to the following five PA students:

1. Joshua Belder, Pennsylvania College of Medicine
2. Alyssa Cook, Rocky Mountain University
3. Sandy Narciso-Owen, Sacred-Heart University
4. Soohyun Park, MCPHS, Boston
5. Priscilla Smith, Mississippi State University



PA History Society's

Mission: To share the history of the development of the PA profession and illustrate how PAs continue to make a difference in our society.

Vision: The PA History Society brings PA history to life by inspiring the next generation of PAs, patients and policymakers.

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PA Program Patch Exhibit

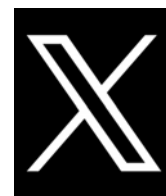
The PAHx currently has 135 PA program patches in our amazing collection. We would love to add your organization's or institution's patch to our website and our archives. If you are unsure if your patch is in our collection, please visit our webpage at: <https://pahx.org/pa-program-patches/>

Please mail your PA patch to:
PA History Society
 12000 Findley Rd.
 Suite 100
 Johns Creek, GA 30097

If you *do not* have a physical patch, please email your digital image to: ContactUs@pahx.org

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SUPPORT PA HISTORY

The Physician Assistant History Society's most recent educational publication:

shipping +
\$35.00 - PAHx website
\$39.95 - Amazon



- An excellent resource for faculty and students!
- Kirkus Review April 2023 excerpt: "This illuminating history of physician assistants in the United States show how a novel medical profession took root and blossomed. "
- The book content may help address the ARC-PA curricular components such as B2.14(d) and B2.17 (b),(c),(e),(f) & (g) to help aid in teaching the history of the PA profession.



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