



Neufeld Society

NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Number 3

July, 1993



Martin Koffman, MD

Our April 1993 *Neufeld Society Newsletter* contained an article featuring **Frank Jobe '56**. It quoted Jobe giving recognition to **Alonzo J. Neufeld '35** for the role Dr. Neufeld played during Jobe's internship at the L. A. County Medical Center. Dr. Jobe was one of many colleagues who spoke to "Lonny" at a testimonial dinner held in Dr. Neufeld's honor in 1983 at the annual meeting of the AAOS in Anaheim. A considerable number of those present that evening had trained under Dr. Neufeld at the L. A. County Medical Center. The names of these individuals are being added to our *Newsletter* mailing list so they can be kept current on the functions of this Society that bears his name.

Remembering and honoring

Remembering our past

by Martin Koffman, MD, President

our past is not a sign of dotage. The Society feels it needs its own historian. **Philip Reiswig '61** has agreed to serve in this capacity, and he may be contacting you for your recollections and memorabilia. The acknowledgment of our past is appropriate—even for such a forward-looking organization as the Neufeld Society.

Our membership is comprised of orthopaedic surgeons representing a broad spectrum of ages, interests, practice modes, affiliations, and subspecialties. While the present restructuring of the practice of medicine in the US will result in changes that will affect each of us differently, it is likely that many of us will need to adjust to enjoying less professional autonomy and perhaps even less income. Your executive board understands this and appreciates your continued sup-

port as shown by your Society membership and by your record attendance at the annual meetings.

I'd like to remind you again that the Alonzo J. Neufeld Research Endowment Fund is a completely separate entity from the Neufeld Society. The Society has committed itself to raising funds for the Research Endowment Fund, but there is no commingling of monies between the two entities. The Society committed itself to raising \$1.5 million for this project. To date we are within \$54,000 of reaching that goal. Although the \$1.5 million will be preserved "in perpetuity," the earnings of this corpus will be used to endow a position of professor of orthopaedic surgery and to support education and research involving the musculoskeletal system.

It is projected that the \$1.5 million goal will be reached by APC '94. Plans are in the making for a grand celebration of this event at our annual Neufeld Society dinner on March 5, 1994. Please reserve that date and plan to be in attendance. Individuals or couples who wish to contribute toward that final \$54,000 goal need not be members of the Neufeld Society. All contributions will be appropriately recognized. ■

**Remembering
and honoring
our past is not a
sign of dotage.**

Vernon Nickel '44-A

A revolutionary orthopaedic surgeon

Adapted by Gery P. Friesen, Editor, from an anonymously written article honoring Dr. Nickel.

In the history of every profession one or more individuals have changed the course of that profession by introducing innovations and ideas that are timeless in their application. **Vernon L. Nickel '44-A**, orthopaedist, was such a man. He pioneered many revolutionary methods in patient care and changed the face of orthopaedic treatment.

Among his contributions to orthopaedic surgery are the halo device and participation in the development of the Harrington rod. He was a forerunner in orthopaedic engineering and polio treatment. The Rancho Los Amigos Hospital in Los Angeles became renowned for its revolutionary treatment of various debilitating diseases including stroke, polio, spinal cord injury, and scoliosis, under Nickel's direction.

Vernon L. Nickel was born May 1, 1918, in the largely Mennonite-SDA village of Waldheim, Saskatchewan. He might never have graced the medical profession if it had not been for the horses the country doctor used to ride into town. "I was 12 when I first thought of becoming



Vernon Nickel '44-A

a doctor. I was enthralled with a pair of bays and a beautiful pair of black horses the doctor owned. 'If a doctor can have horses like those, then I want to become a doctor'."

After finishing all the education he could get in the country

school, he went to what was then Canadian Junior College, in Lacombe, Alberta, and completed his pre-medical studies at Walla Walla College in Washington. After college, Nickel worked as an orderly at the Huntington Memorial Hospital in Pasadena, California, where he became interested in orthopaedics. He eventually earned enough money to enroll at the College of Medical Evangelists, now Loma Linda University School of Medicine. Upon graduation from medicine he began an orthopaedic residency at the Campbell Clinic in Memphis, Tennessee. Before he finished, however, WW II summoned and he went to work at a field hospital as an Army Medical Officer, where he had his first exposure to intramedullary nails and progressive resistance

exercise as injury treatment, both of which piqued his interest in orthopaedics.

After the war he joined orthopaedists **G. Mosser Taylor '24** and **Alonzo J. Neufeld '35** in Southern California, before venturing to Rancho Los Amigos

Hospital to assist their small orthopaedic surgery service—a career move that would prove historic.

Nickel spent the majority of his career (24 years) at Rancho, where he was chief of surgery and medical director from 1964 to 1970. He was responsible for propelling their orthopaedic surgery service into a national force and was instrumental in the development of their major respiratory, scoliosis, and spinal injury centers.

In 1978 he moved to the Veterans Administration Hospital in Washington, D. C. to be director of rehabilitation engineering research and development. Three years later he moved back to California, where he became professor of surgery at the University of California-San Diego, and medical director of the rehabilitation program at Sharp Memorial Hospital.

Perhaps the contribution for which Nickel is remembered for most is the halo device, which he introduced in 1955 for treating spinal fixation patients. Originally used for maxiofacial and frontal facial injuries, Nickel and his colleagues adapted the halo for use in the treatment of spinal conditions such as scoliosis. The device provided a safe and effective method of traction for the cervical and upper thoracic spine, replacing the former and somewhat crude usage of long wires. It was a radical change, but it developed enormously fast and was soon used worldwide.

At the polio respiratory center Nickel was among the first to perform surgery on patients with limited breathing capacities. Up until then it was very dangerous and most breathing-impaired patients died because they could not tolerate the added stress of

anesthesia. Through his work with respirators and the COsb₂ infrared analyzer, Nickel and his colleagues developed a system that measures carbon dioxide, the first use of blood gas analysis electronically. It was a major

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step forward in evaluating the pulmonary functions of patients with polio during surgery. In retrospect Nickel said, "That was the best thing I ever did." Although this procedure took several years to catch on, it is now widely used today to safely anesthetize patients with depressed pulmonary functions.

Nickel also revamped the demographics at Rancho, recruiting many women orthopaedists during a time when there were few women in this specialty. When he was questioned about his choice of women over men he said, "I look for the best orthopaedists. The ones I'm finding happen to be women." One such woman who worked with Nickel for many years breaking ground on poliomyelitis was Dr. Jacqueline Perry. Of her Nickel said, "She's a real star."

Women were not the only ones thankful for his insight. A man ahead of his time, he also championed the concept of delegating professional authority to occupational therapists, physical therapists, and nurses, making them a part of the treatment process. The result was increased morale of the staff and a spirit of teamwork, which led to a successful, collaborative effort in patient rehabilitation at Rancho.

As his interests evolved, Nickel ventured into orthopaedic engineering/robotics, a field in which he saw enormous potential. The first robotic devices were designed for polio patients. "Orthoneering engipedics," as he facetiously referred to this facet of his work, lacked the support of his colleagues in the mid-1950s. Nickel, recognizing the value of the science of engineering as it relates to orthopaedics, went on to become an "ambassador of orthopaedics" at the National Insti-

tutes of Health (NIH). "I was a lone voice crying for engineering research at a time when no one would listen." Today's orthopaedists wouldn't know how to function without orthopaedic engineering; it is now the accepted norm. But there was a time when things were very different. Thanks to Nickel, that aspect of orthopaedics has changed forever.

Nickel also promoted the need for orthopaedists to do reconstructive surgery. He established the first fellowship at Rancho in this discipline, concentrating on

"Orthopaedists need to set aside some of their personal aspirations for glamour and financial income and get back to the basics."

scoliosis and other related problems. He was a strong supporter of academic medicine and when he found an orthopaedist gifted in this area, he encouraged that person to pursue an academic career.

Another concept that Nickel promoted was the idea that the orthopaedist should be the primary physician for patients with neuromusculoskeletal problems like polio, scoliosis, and rheumatoid arthritis.

His medical philosophy was summed up in a reply to a question about the future of orthopaedic surgery. He said, "Orthopaedists need to set aside some of their personal aspirations for glamour and financial income and get back to the basics." ■

My recollections of Dr. Nickel

by Philip H. Reiswig '61

It was fun working with Vern Nickel. He had a great sense of humor and the capacity to laugh at himself. He encouraged those of us who worked with him to achieve and grow professionally; he gave us credit for our accomplishments. No one ever felt exploited or "used." Instead, after working with him one felt a sense of achievement and pride in oneself and in the organizations he led.

In spite of being the medical director at Rancho Los Amigos Hospital and a busy private practitioner, Dr. Nickel, in 1969, accepted the additional responsibility of helping start the LLUMC orthopaedic department. It was my privilege to serve as the department executive secretary. I found that the longer I worked with him the more I respected and appreciated his talents and leadership abilities. He was a nurturing father figure not only to the orthopaedic surgeons he attracted to Loma Linda but also to other physicians whose ca-

Philip Reiswig '61 is an associate professor of orthopaedic surgery, LLUSM, and president-elect of the Neufeld Society.



Philip H. Reiswig '61

reers he influenced during his professional lifetime.

During the last several years as I visited with Dr. Nickel, he spoke less and less of his professional interests and more and more about his family. It was clear to me that his wife, Anna; his children, Daryl, Lowell, and Cheryl; and his grandchildren had come to mean a great deal to him and were for him a source of great satisfaction.

It was a distinct privilege to have worked with Dr. Nickel. I will never forget him. ■

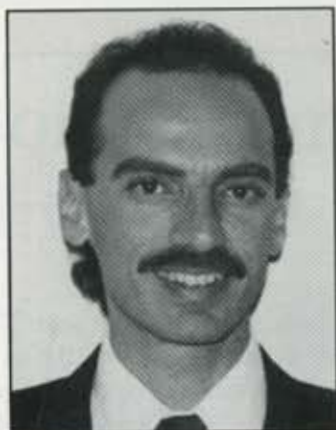
Current Neufeld Society Life Members

Thomas M. Bowen '76-A
William A. Craig '43
Clyde L. Davis '61
David A. Hanscom '78-B
Claran H. Jesse '44-A
Bernarr B. Johnson '52

Wendell M. S. Moses '82
David E. Stabel '70
Raymond M. Takahashi '66
G. Carleton Wallace '56
George J. Wisseman '47
Alan W. Wolf, MD

Virchel E. Wood, Jr. '60

Resident follow-up



Ronny Ghazal '87

Ronny Ghazal '87 was born in Beirut, Lebanon, on November 20, 1962. He came to the United States to attend Pacific Union College in Angwin, California. After completing his pre-medical studies he enrolled at LLUSM, from which he graduated in 1987.

Ronny is married to Catherine. At the time of this writing Ronny and Catherine are expecting their first child. Ronny enjoys tennis and snow skiing.

Dr. Ghazal has joined the San Bernardino County Orthopaedic Medical Group. In time he will pursue a fellowship in sports medicine.



Michael H. Wright '93-Res

Michael H. Wright '93-Res was born on June 22, 1961, in Columbus, Ohio, where he grew up. After attending Ohio State University he went to medical school at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.

A man who claims to have no hobbies, Michael enjoys spending time with his wife, Donna, and their son, Michael.

Dr. Wright will do a spine fellowship at Rush-St. Luke's Hospital in Chicago. He has made no firm plans beyond his spine fellowship.



Ron Mills '93-Res

Ron Mills '93-Res was born November 4, 1957, in Billings, Montana, where he grew up. He attended BYU and went to medical school at the University of Nevada-Reno.

Ron enjoys basketball and skiing. His musical talents are expressed on the piano and with the clarinet. He and his wife, Carrie, have four children: Paul, Brent, Kimberly, and Rebecca.

Dr. Mills has moved to Rexburg, Idaho, where he has joined a private general orthopaedic group that includes **Mike Larson '80-B**.



Randy O'Hara '93-Res

Randy O'Hara '93-Res was born in Rancho Palos Verdes on April 27, 1961. It was here he completed high school. During this time he enjoyed playing his trumpet, but sports activities soon precluded remaining active with this hobby. He attended UC-San Diego, after which he enrolled in Northwestern University-Chicago.

Randy still enjoys tennis, golf, and basketball. The youngest of three boys, Randy was inspired to become a physician by his next older brother, an ob/gyn specialist.

Still single, Dr. O'Hara is doing a spine fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh.

Graduating Hand Fellows

Robert Goldberg, MD, has joined a hand surgery practice at Kaiser Permanente in San Jose.

William Kropp, MD, is in private practice in Savannah, Georgia.

Paul Papierskie, MD, is practicing at Scott Air Force Base, near St. Louis, Missouri.

**The
Alonzo J. Neufeld
Research
Endowment
Fund**

Total received
as of
May 31, 1993

\$1,446,000

Left to raise
by APC '94
March 6, 1994

Only
\$54,000

The
Neufeld Society
Newsletter
is published in
January, April, July
and October



The
Neufeld Society Board
meets on
the Sunday of APC,
April 24,
September 18, and
November 27

APC '94 Symposium Update

by David L. Wood '80-B, Program Chairman

The APC '94 orthopaedic symposium will be an update of trauma to the spine and lower extremity. Instructors will include both outstanding LLU orthopaedic alumni and Southern California orthopaedic surgeons.

The feature speaker will be Charles Taylor, MD, a leading traumatologist from Tennessee, who will share the latest methods of managing different trauma and the complications seen daily in the office.

Other speakers will include Jackson Lee, MD, director of trauma at USC and Donald Wiss, MD, clinical instructor of orthopaedic surgery, USC.

The emphasis will be on the practical management of trauma. New trends include small wire external fixators, reaming versus non-reaming, ultra medullary fixation on peritrochanteric fractures, new instrumentation for spinal fractures, and complications of ultra medullary nailing. All lectures will be supple-



David L. Wood '80-B

mented with small-group panel discussions.

You are being encouraged to attend this meeting and to bring with you any problem cases for discussion. Major instrument makers will present the latest state-of-the-art equipment and instruments and demonstrate their use.

Plan now to get some quality continuing medical education hours satisfied during APC '94. The dates for the symposium are March 6 and 7, 1994. ■

An Invitation

Subrata Saha, PhD, professor and vice chairman for research, department of orthopaedic surgery, LLU, extends an invitation to any member of the Neufeld Society to contact him should you have a research idea you would like to pursue.

You are invited to participate in a collaborative research project with the use of all available equipment.

Why not drop by and visit the research laboratories and acquaint yourself with the possibilities that exist for you to do serious research with the assistance of the research staff?

You can contact Dr. Saha at (909) 824-4418.

The Chairman's corner

by William P. Bunnell, MD, Chairman,
Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, LLUMC

Some of my favorite things

June is my favorite month of the year. Attending graduation reconfirms my decision to stay in academic orthopaedics. Attending weddings refreshes my commitment to remain married. "Attending" my garden reminds me that the only things that grow unattended are weeds!

We held a dinner in June at the San Bernardino Hilton, attended by 125 people, to honor the graduating residents and fellows. It is special that the parents of each senior resident were able to attend and share the proud moment of accomplishment. Two residents and the fellows will enter practice, and two residents will begin fellowships in spine surgery. (See bibliography elsewhere in the *Newsletter*.) We wish them well.

We held our first Annual Orthopaedic Research Seminar in June, at which 14 research papers were presented. A discussion period followed each presentation. I anticipate that this event will quickly grow in depth and sophistication. Grants and support totaling over \$100,000 were obtained this year for current research efforts. We will have several students working on projects this summer in addition to residents who will rotate through the lab for six months. We are attempting to obtain ad-



William P. Bunnell, MD

ditional space in the lab to accommodate all this activity.

The tables were turned this year when we asked the resi-

dents to fill out an evaluation on each faculty member (there are now 18 full-time faculty at LLUMC, San Bernardino County Hospital, and the Jerry L Pettis Memorial Veterans Hospital). The "grades" and comments generally reflected a high level of satisfaction and appreciation for the program and its faculty.

We recently provided an office in the Medical Center for our residents and have equipped it with a new MacIntosh computer (complete with CD-ROM player), laser printer, and desk-top slidemaker (no games!).

November is my least favorite month of the year. I'll tell you why sometime. ■



The second annual Minority Student Summer Research Program began July 16, 1993. From 66 applications 10 of the most promising minority students were chosen to spend the summer doing supervised research in the orthopaedic research department. Subrata Saha, PhD, the director, is assisted by Delbert Baker, PhD, Ann Bradshaw, and June Moscoso. The program is funded by NIH.



Please enroll me as a member of

The Neufeld Society

Annual Membership:

- Regular \$100 Resident at _____ Completing in 19____
- Resident, Retired, Honorary, First year in practice are Dues-free
- Neufeld Society Tietack/lapel pin \$30
- Alonzo J. Neufeld Research Endowment Fund: \$ _____
- Neufeld Society Life Membership \$1,500 Neufeld Society Dinner \$35

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Received MD degree from _____ in 19 _____

Completed Residency at _____ in 19 _____



Neufeld Society NEWSLETTER

The *Neufeld Society Newsletter* is produced by the Alumni Association, School of Medicine of Loma Linda University, and is free to all orthopaedists. Your written request will place you on the mailing list.

President: Martin Koffman, MD
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Gery P. Friesen

1994 Nom. Comm: Drs. **Carl Henning '63, Richard Rouhe '65, Eskild Reinhold '68**

All *Neufeld Society* Correspondence and manuscripts should be directed to the Editor, *Neufeld Society Newsletter*, 11245 Anderson Street, Loma Linda, CA 92354.

Please Note:

The dates for APC '94 have been changed.

The new dates are
March 4 to 9, 1994

The Neufeld Symposium will convene on **March 6 & 7**

Neufeld Society

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