



OAK LEAF

Wake County Medical Society

V1. MARCH 2024

From the President

At no point in my career have I felt that the bonds between health care providers have been more important. While there is a consistent barrage of messages on maintaining wellness, we all know that finding purpose and meaning in our work is one of our most effective defenses against burnout. And a critical piece of our armor is our support for each other. The WCMS endeavors to find experiences that highlight the purpose and meaning of our work and to build the professional relationships that enhance and sustain our medical careers.



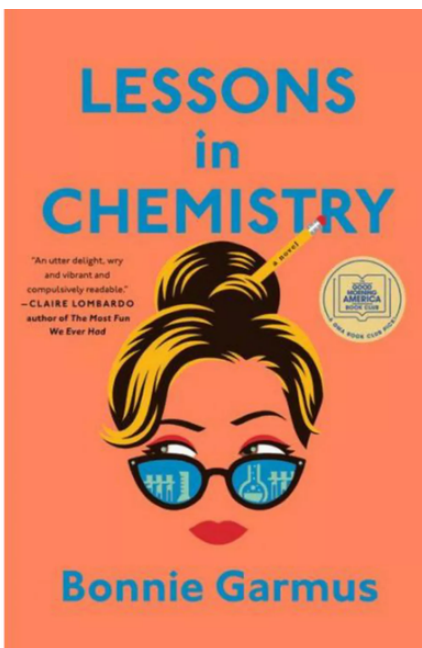
John E.R. Perry, III, MD, FACP
President (2024-2025)

In the our 120 years of existence, there is no greater attraction to the Wake County Medical Society than the enduring spirit of the original motto, "nurturing the bonds between us." It's exciting and gratifying to be a member of the leadership team of a revamped Wake County Medical Society. Taking over for Dr. Ted Kunstling, I hope to maintain the momentum that he has generated. In addition, I'm appreciative of the work, energy, and ideas of our Executive Council, including that of our new additions, Dr. Karen Bash and Dr. Susheel Atree. Dr. Vinay Saranga's work as Secretary/Treasurer and Dr. David Gremillion's immense efforts revising the bylaws and combing through the history of the organization have given us an appreciation of our trajectory and our raison d'être. Dr. Sharon Foster and Dr. Bob Munt continue to lead our program committee in finding activities for uncovering the common linkages between us as well as allowing for self-reflection and self-discovery.

Read more at wakedocs.org.

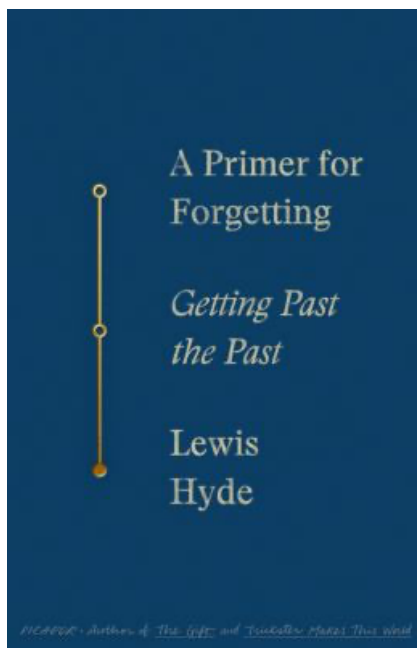
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APRIL 3



LED BY ALLEN HAYES
HOST: ALLEN HAYES

JUNE 5



LED BY DAVID GREMILLION
HOST: TBD

WCMS Book Club

WCMS members who enjoy reading, good conversation, and fellowship are invited to participate in the WCMS Book Club which meets five times yearly in members' homes at 6:30 PM on first Wednesdays. Books are suggested and selected by the members and include a variety of genres, including fiction and nonfiction. A light supper and refreshments are served. For more information about meetings, please send an email to wakecountymedicalsociety@gmail.com.

[More info](#) >



WCMS MEETINGS & EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held at 222 N Person St, Raleigh NC 27691.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING



APR 9

JUL 16

SEP 17

NOV 19

ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTIONS

OCT 15 | 6:30PM

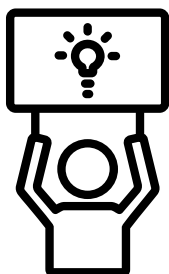
Dinner is served at 6:30pm, program begins at 7:00pm.

GET SOCIAL

Join the conversation on social media.



Follow us on Facebook.



Suggest an event <https://forms.gle/DRo58Cxb452Nm8Qg8>

MAR

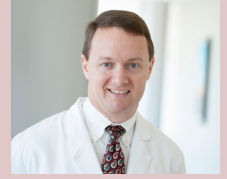
19

7:00pm

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Intersection of History and Medicine
Guest Speaker: Michael Soboeiro, MD

CME Credit available. Dinner is served at 6:30pm, program begins at 7:00pm.



[More info](#) >

MAY

4

10:00am

WCMS FAMILY PICNIC

110th Anniversary of Annie Wilkerson Nature Preserve

Join us for food, family and fun from 10:00am - 1:00pm.



5229 Awls Have Drive
Raleigh, NC 27614

[More info](#) >

JUN

8

8:00pm

SUMMERFEST: NC SYMPHONY

North Carolina's own Steep Canyon Rangers —Grammy-winners and Billboard chart-toppers—join your North Carolina Symphony for an evening of bluegrass, Americana, and folk rock.



Koka Booth
Amphitheatre

[More info](#) >

AUG

20

7:00pm

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Imposter Syndrome
Guest Speaker: To be announced

CME Credit available. Dinner is served at 6:30pm, program begins at 7:00pm.



[More info](#) >

DEC

8

6:00pm

WCMS HOLIDAY PARTY

Join us in celebrating the season from 6:00pm - 9:00pm.



North Ridge
Country Club

[More info](#) >

Visit wakedocs.org for more information about events and meetings.



From the Editor

Our members are remarkable individuals, each travelling their own life journeys, facing challenges, achieving successes, failures, joy, and sorrow. We learn and grow from our experiences, and my hope is that by sharing with our colleagues, we can support one another.

Communication with our members is vital for WCMS's renewal following COVID. This year, a new quarterly electronic newsletter, The Oak Leaf, is being created under the editorship of Ted Kunstling MD, to better inform our members not only of our society's activities but also the activities and interests of our individual members - physicians, surgeons, and PAs.

The oak has long served as a symbol of medicine as well as the Rod of Aesculapius with its single serpent used in the WCMS and AMA logos and the Caduceus with double serpents used by the Army Medical Corps and the U.S. Public Health Service.

The USPHS insignia also contains an anchor reflecting its origins in 1798 as the US Marine Hospital Service established to care for seamen. The oak leaf uniform insignia of the Navy Medical Corps is familiar to those who have served in the sea services. The oak has symbolized healing since the ancient druids. Thus, as a Navy veteran who practiced in Raleigh, the "City of Oaks," the name seems appealing.

WCMS members are accomplished individuals with much valuable experience and knowledge worth sharing. Please take time to share your stories with your colleagues in the WCMS Oak Leaf.

Finally, my extreme thanks and gratitude are extended to Christy Farrelly whose time and talent has been essential to creation of format template for Oak Leaf.

Ted Kunstling MD, Editor,
WCMS Oak Leaf



Members by the Numbers

491 Physicians, 30 PAs*

*as of 2023



wakedocs.org



Join our Facebook Group



Meet the Executive Council

[Click here](#) →



Submit your stories and contributions for the Oak Leaf.

Wake County Medical Society Executive Council



John E.R. Perry, III, MD, FACP
President (2024-2025)



Sharon Foster, MD, FAAP
Vice President (2024-2025)



Vinay Saranga, MD
Secretary-Treasurer (2024-2025)



Ted R. Kunstling, MD, FCCP
Past President (2024-2025)



Karen Bash, MD, FACOG
Board Member (2024-2025)



David Gremillion, MD, FACP
Board Member (2023-2024)



Susheel Atree, MD, FACP
Board Member (2024-2025)



Robert Munt, Jr., MD, FAAP
Board Member (2023-2024)





Highlights

Following a catered dinner, Dr. John Perry, President, welcomed members to the first general meeting of the WCMS held in the Headquarter Building of the NC Medical Society.

Dr. Perry reported that the medical residency program at WakeMed had successfully filled its fourth PGY1 cohort of five trainees in internal medicine. These included Salomey Antwi, Kenneth Azore, Apoorva Gupta, Kevin Lee, and Samuel Light, four of whom had local connections before medical school. Dr Perry also reported that three of the first PGY3 cohort will be remaining in Wake County as they enter practice.

The guest speaker, Michael Soboeiro MD, Associate Program Director for Ambulatory Medicine at WakeMed, presented on The Intersection of History and Medicine, discussing the final illnesses of Presidents George Washington, Franklin Roosevelt, and Dwight Eisenhower.

Washington enjoyed good health until suddenly afflicted by acute bacterial epiglottitis at age 67. His demise while under the care of three doctors was hastened by massive blood -letting (2.4 liters) while a possible life-saving tracheostomy recommended by the youngest of the attendings was vetoed by his seniors. Had Washington lived longer, he might have ameliorated development of scurrilous partisan politics in the 1800 election, a tradition which lives on to this day.

Roosevelt succumbed to the ravages of malignant hypertension resulting in severe deterioration of his health by the time he attended the Yalta Conference near the end of World War II. At the time the consequences of hypertension were poorly understood and there was no effective treatment. His failing health may have contributed to agreements which doomed eastern Europe to decades of communist rule and Russian domination following the war.

Eisenhower experienced an acute myocardial infarction while golfing in Denver and hospitalized at Fitzsimmons Army Hospital. He walked into the hospital so as to avoid projecting an image of weakness and treatment consisted of bedrest. An eminent cardiologist, Dr. Paul Dudley White, flew in from Boston but left after a day as he had no treatment to offer. At that time, there were no coronary care units, cardiac catheterization labs, coronary by-pass procedures, stenting, and other procedures familiar to us today while smoking was considered only a possible minor contribution to coronary disease. Eisenhower had seven more heart attacks and underwent colon surgery before he died several years later. His hospital room remains preserved in its 1950s configuration in the old Fitzsimmons Hospital building, now a part of the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. It appears like a modest contemporary hotel room (except no big screen TV, of course). There are no monitors, IV stands or other accoutrements of a contemporary hospital room.

CME credit for this event was available by submitting a claim to AHEC within 24 hours. You must have an AHEC account. Which can be created at <https://www.wakeahec.org>. You will need your email address and password. Watch for directions and the appropriate link following future presentations.

Ted Kunstling MD, Editor,
WCMS Oak Leaf

MAR

19

7:00pm

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Intersection of History and Medicine
Guest Speaker: Michael Soboeiro, MD

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[More info](#) >



This article is a reprint from the Wake County Physicians Magazine that was spearheaded by Dr. Assad Meymandi who found a way to not only deliver information, but start meaningful conversations around the many things that shape Wake County, the community and its physicians.

Dr. Assad Meymandi

By Christy Farrelly



For ten years the Wake County Physicians Magazine has been profiling medical professionals who go beyond the simple practice of being a physician by making a difference in the way we view medicine, live life and contribute to our communities. On this special occasion, it is such a pleasure to honor a physician who is not only the architect of this magazine, but has been and continues to be a profound inspiration on so many levels for our

community, Dr. Assad Meymandi.

The Meymandi lineage actually originates in a small city over 12,000 years old, aptly named Meymand. Commonly known as the "City of Roses," it is carved in the rocks of Iran, has lush gardens and conveys the balanced existence between man and his environment. The Meymandi ancestors eventually made their home in the historic city of Kerman in southeast Iran.

Dr. Assad Meymandi was born to a family rich in heritage and ancestry in the antiquity of Kerman, surrounded by ancient architecture and historic monuments. Here, enveloped in the richness of heritage and culture, his family instilled in him the importance of education, art, honesty and family. The youngest of nine children, it was clear to his family that he possessed special skills and talents and an elevated degree of integrity. As his brother, Javad, puts it so graciously, it is as if "all of the chromosomes of generations came together perfectly in him."

On one occasion, his father, an ardent poet, philanthropist and philosopher, returned home to find that a very precious and significant black box had been broken into pieces. Calling all of the children together, he asked what had happened to one of his most treasured possessions. The youngest of all stepped forward and revealed that he had broken the box. When his father asked him why he would do such a thing to something so dear, he simply responded, "I wanted to see how strong I am."

Dr. Meymandi always showed an exceptional talent for learning and comprehension. With no formal training, he would join in foreign language conversation as if he had studied in the native country. On any given sub-

ject of interest, he would be given books of study and completely immerse himself until he understood it to the core. Under the guidance of his mother, a devoted patron of the arts, his father and his siblings, Dr. Meymandi enjoyed a life rich in art, philosophy and scholarship and seemed to have an innate understanding of their interconnectivity.

His father passed away when he was seven and, with the strength, influence and mentorship of his mother and family, he persevered in his life path. His regimented education coupled with self-discipline allowed him to fully explore his uncommon talent for learning history, language and the arts. He went to a prestigious Jesuit school in Tehran. Graduating top of his class and with the highest marks in all of Iran, he continued a family tradition and attended the Sorbonne in France at the age of 16. Here, he again graduated top of his class and discovered his aptitude for the sciences, which turned him to the study of medicine. He opted to travel to the United States of America to fulfill his medical education.

Flying to New York City, not speaking a word of English and with no experienced knowledge of the culture, he chose to fully immerse himself traveling by bus from NYC to Logan Utah to meet his older brother, Javad. He memorized the English Dictionary and studied relentlessly to learn the language, history and culture. Upon expressing interest in medicine, he was met with some cautionary opposition. Some friends expressed their belief that medicine was an extremely challenging field and presented several reasons why it would be such an arduous task, especially for someone who just arrived in the USA. He met their arguments with one simple phrase, 'I will do it with determination.' And so began his journey in the medical profession.

Dr. Assad Meymandi attended undergraduate school at Arizona State University. Prior to his graduation, he was accepted into medical school. He chose to attend George Washington University and, as with all of his formal education, he graduated at the top of his class in 1962. He proved to be a talented surgeon, but found that specialty lacking in human connection. Instead, he discovered the field of psychiatry during a rotation at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington DC. For him, this was the field that would combine all of his knowledge and talents. "Psychiatry is the only medical specialty that offers a person to be a doctor, scientist, humanist, theologian, artist and art lover."

His decision to continue his residency at Dorthea Dix

Hospital was the beginning of his great love affair with Raleigh and North Carolina. Staying for the full three-year program, he completed rotations in adult, pediatric and child psychiatry. At that time, there were some real visionaries in the field, particularly in North Carolina. Some key state and federal legislation developments made the next decade a honeymoon for mental health. Dr. Assad Meymandi saw a need in Cumberland County, Fayetteville in particular, and became very interested in the development of a comprehensive mental health program and soon became medical and area director for the Cumberland County Mental Health Center. Making great strides in the health of this community, he served as Chairman of the Cumberland County Mental Health Board, Chief of Staff at the Cape Fear Valley Medical Center and continued his private practice in Psychiatry and Neurology.

Returning to Raleigh in 1993, Dr. Meymandi continued his private practice. Because of his love and passion for psychiatry and patients, he will see patients as long as he is able. His book, *Community Psychiatry*, was published in 1997 and he continues to contribute editorials, articles and opinion pieces for lay and professional journals. He has served on the editorial board for the *NC Medical Journal* and is currently a member of the editorial board for *The Disability Analyst* and *The American Journal of Forensic Medicine*. Dr. Meymandi is a Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, a Life Member of the AMA, Life Member of the Southern Medical Association and a Founding Fellow of the International Academy for Research in Learning & Disabilities.

His contributions to this community are far-reaching. Dr. Meymandi has laid a foundation of growth, not only to nurture the mental health of individuals, but our community as a whole. He has played an instrumental role in the development of artistic, scholastic and philanthropic organizations. Serving on the board for the NC Arts Council since 2001 and having recently been re-appointed for a second term, he has helped the organization with their work in Western European arts - from symphonic music and opera to ballet and modern dance. He has served on the Board of Trustees for the National Center for the Humanities for five years and been a long-time attendee of lectures and seminars. The recent endowment of the Meymandi Fellowship invites distinguished visitors for a short-term to further enhance the dialogue and connectivity of the humanities, science and arts. Equally supported by Dr. Meymandi and his family is the North Carolina Symphony and their most recent permanent home - Meymandi Hall, named in honor of his mother who passed away in 1994 at the age of 101. Currently, he serves as President of the NCSU Friends of the Library. In addition, he has established and supported scholarship and philanthropy programs, elementary and middle school music summer camps and taught post-graduate and Adult Education courses on Neuroendocrinology of Salvation, Biochemistry of Behaviour and Happiness. His most recent and grand interest lies in the making of a Raleigh city-park from the Dorthea Dix campus.

He has been honored with numerous awards, including being named an Honorary Woman, and continues to explore and assist in building paths of productive living here and in his native country. He has built a library and an elementary school named for his mother, who was such a great and profound inspiration in his love of literature, arts and music, in Iran. When Bam, an Iranian city lying 200 miles southeast of Kerman, was devastated by a powerful earthquake in December 2000, he proudly assisted in the rebuilding process.

Dr. Meymandi's aptitude and thirst for knowledge has not waned since his youth and his uniqueness lies in the quality of his reception to the environment. As his ancestors lived in harmony with the rock 'city of roses,' so Dr. Meymandi has found that balance. He puts forward his personal experiences and knowledge and is uncommonly sensitive to the teachings of his surroundings. That is not to say that he does not play a role in defining his surroundings. He hears and feels every breath and seeks to fill the air with knowledge, reason and purpose.

Dr. Meymandi is forever trying to see how strong he is, how much more he can learn, and how much more he can share. He continues to bring incredible foresight in his contributions to our community and is forever an inspiration to members of his family. The brother and sisters who were once his mentors now cherish his guidance and analysis. In all of his endeavors and relationships, he takes a great deal of personal interest and is outwardly supportive of organizations, staff and family.

Dr. Meymandi has three children Eric, Chris and Spencer with his wife, Pat, who has sadly passed away in 1990 and for whom the Patricia S. Meymandi Scholarship at Fayetteville Technical College is named. He has five grandchildren.

His involvement and strong commitment to family, ancestry and what it means in ones development and direction is shared with his current wife, Emily. She is his constant companion sharing in his love of living and learning and considers herself to be "the luckiest woman in the world." Her presence in his life propels his already optimistic view and improves his goodness. She has seen him conquer colon cancer with his optimism and unbeatable spirit and feels blessed to be able to share life with someone who truly enjoys living.

Dr. Assad Meymandi has left an indelible mark on this community. Giving us the tools and resources to achieve our own level of self-attainment through the arts, humanities and sciences, and in doing so realizing their interconnectivity in our lives and communities.



Submit your stories and contributions for the Oak Leaf.



From the Executive Council

On November 19, WCMS was honored to host President Thomas Jefferson on one of his rare visits south of the Roanoke River, meeting in Haywood Hall. Refreshments and conversation were enjoyed as members and guests toured the home of generations of distinguished Raleigh physicians now beautifully maintained by the Colonial Dames. President Jefferson, portrayed by Bill Barker, shared his experiences and views with the audience seated outdoors in the front yard on a beautiful autumn evening although was perplexed when 40 cellphones sounded simultaneously with an amber alert!

On December 4, WCMS celebrated its 120th anniversary with a gala held in the Executive mansion freshly decorated for the holiday season. Gov. & Mrs. Roy Cooper honored us by attending, the governor thanking members for their service to our community, especially during the COVID pandemic, and celebrating Medicaid expansion. Gov. Cooper was presented with a copy of "A Heritage of Healing: Two Hundred Years of Medicine in Wake County" by Lisa Huggins Towle.

Following this, Dr. David Gremillion briefly surveyed highlights and physicians and surgeons who have made a difference in Wake County; he also prepared a detailed poster highlighting these. Dr. Ted Kunstling, outgoing President, thanked those who have contributed so much to support the Society over the recent challenging years and expressed his optimism about its future. He then administered an oath of office to the elected leadership for 2024-2025. Finally, our new president, Dr. John Perry wished all a Happy Holiday and New Year.



View image gallery from all events at wakedocs.org.

