

Tar Heel Tandem

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NCMS ALLIANCE: MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

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Sharyn McCrumb to deliver Hubbard Memorial Lecture

The NCMS Alliance is pleased to announce that author Sharyn McCrumb will present the Anne H. Hubbard Memorial Lecture during the 2009 Annual Meeting scheduled for April 16 in Charlotte, NC.

McCrumb is the award-winning author of the novel *St. Dale*, the story of ordinary people who go on a pilgrimage in honor of racing legend Dale Earnhardt, and find a miracle. This "*Canterbury Tales*" in a NASCAR setting, won a 2006 Library of Virginia Award as well as the AWA Book of the Year Award. Her newest novel *Once Around the Track*, again set in NASCAR, is a nominee for the 2007 Weatherford Award.

She is best known for her Appalachian "Ballad" novels, set in the North Carolina/Tennessee mountains, including New York Times Best Sellers *She Walks These Hills* and *The Rosewood Casket*, which deal with the issue of the vanishing wilderness, and *The Ballad of Frankie Silver*, the story of the first woman hanged for murder in the state of North Carolina; *The Songcatcher*, a genealogy in music; and *Ghost Riders*, an account of the Civil War in the Appalachians.

McCrumb's great-grandfathers were circuit preachers in North Carolina's Smoky Mountains a hundred years ago, riding horseback over the ridges to preach in a different community each week. It is from them, she says, that she gets her regard for books, her gift of storytelling and public speaking, and her love of the Appalachian Mountains.

"My books are like Appalachian quilts," says Sharyn McCrumb. "I take brightly colored

scraps of legends, ballads, fragments of rural life, and local tragedy, and I piece them together into a complex whole that tells not only a story, but also a deeper truth about the culture of the mountain South."

The author's honors include: the Wilma Dykeman Award for Literature given by the East Tennessee Historical Society; AWA Outstanding Contribution to Appalachian Literature Award; the Chaffin Award for Southern Literature; the Plattner Award for Short Story; and AWA's

Best Appalachian Novel. A graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with an MA in English from Virginia Tech, McCrumb was the first writer-in-residence at King College in Tennessee. In 2005 she was honored as the writer of the year at Emory & Henry College.

Her novels, studied in universities throughout the world, have been translated into more than ten languages, including German, Dutch, Japanese, and Italian. She has lectured on her work at Oxford University, the University of Bonn-Germany, and at the Smithsonian Institution and taught a writers workshop in Paris. A film of her novel *The Rosewood Casket* is currently in production, directed by British Academy Award nominee Roberto Schaefer.

"McCrumb writes with a quiet fire
and maybe a little mountain magic ...
Like every good storyteller, she has the Sight."
- *The New York Times*



Author Sharyn McCrumb

From Your President

*Beverly Wright
NCMS Alliance President*



So much to do so little time! It seems that we all feel that way this time of year. Fall is so busy and then we are faced with an even busier season starting in November, but with this feeling of exhaustion, comes a feeling of accomplishment.

The past few months have been among the busiest of the year for most of our counties. New members have been welcomed, projects have been started, and regular meetings have gotten underway. The state Alliance has been busy as well. In addition to the work of all of our standing committees, we have put on our Tenth Annual Symposium, kicked off our Get Fit Challenge, and some of us have attended the Fall Leadership Development Conference in Chicago.

You will read more about the LDC in this issue of Tandem. We hope that even more of our members will be able to join us as we travel to Washington in March for the AMA Alliance

Capitol Conference and the National Advocacy Conference.

The speakers at this year's symposium did an outstanding job of addressing ways to reduce gang activity, keep children in school, keep children safe on the internet, and mentor children as they make important and healthy decisions. All of the ideas focused on working with the strengths of our youth rather than focusing on weaknesses or disabilities. There was an opportunity for interactive learning with an activity designed to show how to look for signs of drug use in a teenager's room. I was delighted to see many of you at the symposium. I appreciate your attendance. I want to thank our committee, our sponsors, and our members for their effort and their support of this project.

We began the 2008 Get Fit Challenge on October 1. Teams are logging their miles for a good cause – improving the health of our members and our state. There are many reasons to increase you activity, in fact too many to list here, so please read the separate article in this issue of Tandem.

As always, our board invites your participation and your ideas. This year, we are holding our board meetings in various locations across the state and inviting you, our members, to join us for lunch, to chat with us, and to hear the guest speakers that we have invited to each of our board meetings. On November 6, we had a presentation from Krista Crawford-Mathis which asked, "Have you taken your leadership pill today?" At our January meeting, our speaker will be Chip Baggett, the Director of Legislative Relations of the North Carolina Medical Society. Please contact our office if you would like more information on speakers or would like to attend. We look forward to seeing you at one of these meetings or in your county. Anne Kahn, our president-elect, and I are happy to attend meetings across the state, just ask us

Have Gavel will Travel!

Angie's Notes



Greetings from your NCMS Alliance state headquarters! We are very excited to report that the 10th Annual Symposium was a wonderful success. Thanks go to our Symposium Committee Chairs Kathy Kobs and Julie Newman and all of the members that have supported this

important program this year and during the last ten years. We are pleased to share photos from the event in this newsletter and more may be found on-line at www.ncmsalliance.org

The 4th Annual Get Fit NC County Alliance Challenge is also in full swing! Last year county Alliance teams shattered our goal to reach more than 58,000 miles of exercise. The challenge began on October 1 and ends next March. It is never too late to join your team or start a team in your county. Taking part in the Get Fit Challenge is a great way to support your Alliance and focus on wellness.

Don't forget to send us lots of photos and details regarding your county Alliance projects! We can post them on the NCMS Alliance and share your news through the Tar Heel Tandem. You can e-mail photos and information anytime to editor@ncmsalliance.org.

Tarheel Tandem

Tarheel Tandem is published four times a year by the North Carolina Medical Society Alliance.

Next Deadline: January 9, 2009

Annette Gehle, Assistant Editor

Please send submissions by email at editor@ncmsalliance.org



2008 Get Fit NC County Alliance Challenge

The *Get Fit Challenge* is underway. Teams from counties across the state have started counting their miles as they add exercise to their day. We hope that they will improve their health

by adding activity to their routine, inspire others to increase their activity level, and bring attention to the need for increased activity at all ages.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, "Regular physical activity, fitness, and exercise are critically important for the health and well being of people of all ages." Research has shown that regular exercise will "reduce the morbidity and mortality from many chronic diseases." While there is wide acknowledgement of the fact that increased physical activity leads to better health, statistics show that people are leading a more and more sedentary lifestyle. Studies have shown that more than 1/3 of children in grades 9-12 do not regularly engage in vigorous physical activity even though the Centers for Disease Control recommends that children and adolescents do 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day. For adults the minimum recommendation is 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity each week or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity each week. The CDC recommends that this be done in addition to doing muscle strengthening activities that work all of the muscle groups in the body at least 2 days per week. The CDC continues by saying that activity may be broken down into very small segments, even 10 minutes, and that "more total time equals more health benefits".

The benefits of physical activity follow you throughout your life. Rather than dwell on the negative effects of the lack of activity, let me tell you what the Department of Health and Human Services tells us are the benefits of increased levels of physical activity:

- Reduces the risk of dying prematurely from heart disease and other conditions;
- Reduces the risk of developing diabetes;
- Reduces the risk of developing high blood pressure;
- Reduces blood pressure in people who already have high blood pressure;
- Reduces the risk of developing colon and breast cancer;
- Helps to maintain a healthy weight;
- Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints;
- Helps older adults to become stronger and better able to move about without falling;
- Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety; and
- Promotes psychological well-being.

Our members hope that by setting a good example for increased physical activity we will be able to inspire others and improve the health of North Carolinians.

References:

[Physical Activity for Everyone](http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html), October 16, 2008.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. October 24, 2005.
<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html>

[Physical Activity Fundamental to Preventing Disease](http://www.aspe.hhs.gov/health/reports/physicalactivity/).
June 20, 2002. United States Department of Health and Human Services.
October 24, 2008. <http://www.aspe.hhs.gov/health/reports/physicalactivity/>

Be sure to do all of your on-line holiday shopping through GoodShop.com and a percentage of your purchase will be donated to the NCMS Alliance (you don't pay anything extra!)? More than 700 great stores including Amazon, Best Buy, Macy's and others have teamed up with GoodShop and every time you place an order, you'll be supporting your state Alliance.

Visit www.goodshop.com
to find participating stores and
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Thank you for your support!

NCMS Alliance 10th Annual Symposium

Bringing Out the Best

The NCMS Alliance presented the 10th Annual Symposium: Bringing Out the Best at the McKimmon Center in Raleigh on October 10. Educators and parents from across the state learned about strength-based strategies and resources to help unlock the potential within children and adolescents.

The program included a keynote presentation from Jennifer Fox, a leader in The Strengths Movement in Schools and author of *Your Child's Strengths: Discover*



(left to right) NCMS Alliance President Beverly Wright, author Jennifer Fox and Symposium Co-Chairs, Julie Newman and Kathy Kobs.



Danya Perry from Communities In Schools of North Carolina discusses the impact of gangs on communities

Them, Develop Them, Use Them. Workshops also addressed increasing the graduation rate, tackling the impact and challenges presented by gangs in our communities and understanding how to combat cyber-bullying, child identify theft and harassment.

Since its inception, the NCMS Alliance symposium has engaged more than 2,000 educators, parents and professionals committed to improving the health and well being of North Carolina's youth. To view additional photos from this year's event and a list of past symposium, please visit www.ncmsalliance.org.



Presenter Lindsey Deere and Pat Udekwa



Adrian Sundiata presents on teen culture

10th Annual Symposium
Bringing Out the Best:
Unlocking the Potential of Every Child

presented by
the North Carolina Medical Society Alliance

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Report from AMA Alliance Legislative Committee at LDC

Submitted by Julie Newman, AMA Alliance Legislative Committee Member & NCMS Alliance Immediate Past President

The AMA Alliance Legislative Committee met during the Leadership Development Conference in Chicago October 4-6. Todd Askew, the director of congressional affairs for the AMA, addressed the committee on issues important to the family of medicine. He spoke of both successes and failures from this most recent Congress and set out the agenda for the next. Among the negatives Askew pointed out were the failure to enact tobacco regulation and a change in the treatment of medical school debt. However, the legislation to regulate tobacco has achieved 60 co-sponsors in the Senate, which would provide a veto-proof majority in that body. It has already passed the House. As for the positives, the AMA worked to achieve mental health parity and genetic information non-discrimination. The most important achievement was the passage of the Save Medicare Act of 2008.

The AMA has set their priorities for the upcoming year. Health care reform will be a major domestic policy; SCHIP will need to be reauthorized by March 6, 2009; the AMA will continue to work with specialty societies to develop a better formula to calculate Medicare reimbursements. There will be other items of interest to medicine including the changing face of the physician workforce, anti-trust issues, increases in quality reporting and information technology as well as an increased focus on transparency and financial relationships.

Askew spoke of the impact of the grassroots efforts of all Alliance members in lobbying legislators at all levels to improve health and health care. He stressed that the Alliance will be integral in the reauthorization of SCHIP in March as well as in other legislative priorities. **To receive timely updates on advocacy issues from the AMA Alliance, please visit www.amaalliance.org to register for the Advocacy Network.**

2008 Leadership Development Conference

The AMA Alliance hosted the 2008 Leadership Development Conference (LDC) for Alliance members in Chicago from October 5-7. Participants from North Carolina included NCMS Alliance President Beverly Wright, President-elect Anne Kahn, Carolyn Green, President of the Greater Greensboro Society of Medicine Alliance, and Annie Anthony, President-elect of the Gaston County Medical Society Alliance.

This was my first experience with LDC and I have to say, I was impressed. There were so many useful sessions and the opportunity to mix and mingle with folks from around the country was the best part.

Carolyn Green

The one lecture that stands out for me was one given by Wayne and Mary Sotile. These two dynamic individuals spoke on the medical marriage and the work/life balance that is required to sustain it. The Sotiles stress that we must take care of ourselves so we can manage our work, relationships, and emotions. Doing so will not only help us to sustain our marriage but to hopefully grow it as well.

Annie Anthony

Dr. Palmisiano's advice on how to attract new members and encourage leadership among alliance members gave me courage to refine my leadership skills. I found his lecture mesmerizing and will use these skills in the year ahead.

Anne Kahn



Annie Anthony and Anne Kahn take part in the RiverWalk Fundraiser in memory of Dolores Chandra.

North Carolina Physicians Health Program

The North Carolina Physicians Health Program (NCPHP) is dedicated to improving the quality of health care for the people in North Carolina through assurance of healthy medical professionals. NCPHP is the only organization in the state offering identification, intervention and rehabilitation programs that are non-disciplinary in practice for physicians and physician assistants.

For more information about the organization and the resources offered through the NCPHP, please contact 919-870-4480 or toll-free at 800-783-6792 or visit the web site at www.ncphp.org

The following article submitted by the NCPHP represents the personal story of one family affected by substance abuse.

Relapse & Recovery: A Family Perspective

I never thought I'd really be able to say I was glad my husband is a recovering person, but I truly am. He's not the doctor he would have been without his addiction – he's vastly better, and so am I. He's not only brilliant and capable, but he's tenderhearted, humble, caring. He knows how to listen, how to be wrong and try another approach. He knows how to be a husband and a father who's fully alive to the moment he's in with each of his family. I firmly believe some of these qualities come from AA, although the capacity to learn from his program must always have been there. Recovering people are the best folks in the world! Attending open AA meetings helps me to be compassionate and understanding to my addicted husband. Attending Al-Anon meetings helps me to grow into myself in the way I was meant to be.

I used to test my life against a soap opera tape I ran in my imagination. When things didn't go as planned, I immersed myself in shame. I struggled every moment to figure out and to become what others expected of me, even when those expectations were wildly out of sync with who I really was. I wanted to make everyone happy. What a hopeless task – no wonder I felt inadequate so much of the time.

I found so much relief in the first step of Al-Anon. Admitting I am powerless over alcohol – and over my husband's disease, over his recovery and sobriety – is crucial to my happiness. It's not a goal for me, but a simple acknowledgment of reality. There's no point in even trying to control something I have no power over. Much better to "let go and let God," even though I realize my Higher Power is not bound to do what I say! It turns out that being happy myself is the very best gift I can give to my loved ones.

At first it drove me nuts in Al-Anon that no one would tell me what to do. Everyone simply offered his or her experience, strength, and hope as I am doing here – never any advice. Realizing that this is a relapsing illness, I began with my sponsor to make plans that might help in case of a relapse. I learned to set my own boundaries. As I figured out what they were, I tried to communicate them to those I loved. For example, I realized eventually that I could not live with active addiction in my home, although I knew plenty of others who could, and did. Sometimes I found that I needed to adjust myself to reality rather than shaping it. I learned when my husband

relapsed, that I ultimately felt more secure if I submitted unquestioningly to the recommendations of those who worked to frame the plan for his treatment. I took solace in his going to a reputable residential treatment center, but initially bristled when it was for a much longer time than I had envisioned. But experience has taught me that, following relapse, in order for a transformation to occur in my husband, it is crucial that the entire family is involved. To a large extent, that means my going along with a plan I have not participated in making and do not understand. In fact, I may disagree strongly with aspects of it. Nevertheless, I have discovered that my family's serenity rests on my voluntary and enthusiastic submission to the treatment plan. This leads to our happiness and contentment and a nice byproduct is that my husband's recovery is supported by the serenity of his family.

Some aspects of a relapse plan are highly pragmatic. Facing relapse, I was told by my sponsor that I should identify clearly what I needed for my serenity. At the time, this meant keeping my nanny no matter what, so that I could keep my job. I realized that I could deal with financial worry much better if my job was secure. When my husband came home from treatment and offered to save money by taking care of the children, I already had my response prepared!

Setting my boundaries with regard to relapse has not always been easy. I worried when my husband and his counselor at the treatment center asked me to flag signs of relapse for him. I was afraid this was inconsistent with my own program, remembering my sponsor's warning that "to watch is not to love." I talked with my sponsor about it and finally decided that what I had to avoid was to go looking for trouble. However, it would be all right for me just to tell my husband what I was seeing, so long as it was understood that I would not be responsible for the truth of my observation or for being right about it being a sign of relapse. I could say that he seemed unusually sleepy, for example, but then it was up to him to follow up on it or not.

Relapse is a life-changing event. As scary and sad as it is, it can be an opportunity for meaningful growth in a relationship and for a spiritual and emotional blossoming that can end in joy and laughter.

2008-2009 CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

November 30 NCMS Alliance Grant Deadline

2009

January 28	NCMS Alliance Board Meeting (Raleigh)
February 28	NCMS Alliance Grant Deadline
March 4	Teleconference with County Leaders
March 10-11	AMA Alliance Capitol Conference (Washington, D.C.)
March 1-31	Medical Alliance Month
March 30	Doctors' Day
April 16-17	NCMS Alliance Annual Meeting (Charlotte)

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The NCMS Alliance's cozy "Honoring Physicians" stadium blanket is a perfect holiday gift for a special physician or medical family!

These unique blankets designed to honor North Carolina physicians feature the NCMS Alliance logo. Quantities are limited so order your blanket today! The NCMS Alliance "Honoring Physicians" blanket is available for \$50 plus shipping. (\$20 of each purchase is tax deductible).

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