**Richard J. Hannigan’s Retirement and its Impact on the American Urological Association**

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Our 'Magnificent Memory" has actually packed it in! Executive Secretary Richard J. Hannigan has decided that 32 years of most devoted attention to our details entitle him to solace and qui­

etude. Of course he deserves the chance to get to his flower garden

and his languages. Both are hobbies in which he excels.

This most unusual man has in fact waited on us, every single one of us, in some fashion or another, for 32 years! Initially he came aboard the AUA as an assistant meeting planner and rose to the position of executive secretary. There has not been an officer or member of the Board of Directors, or any of the few on the historic staff that he joined in 1965, or the elegant staff Dick surrounded himself with, who does not consider “RH" as a personal friend, confidant, prudent and astonishingly informed counsel, teacher, master wordsmith or sorter of information into its relevant shades. Not a single negative surfaced or could be extracted from anyone who ever knew Dick. Nor was he negative about anyone.

He did not ever come on strongly, even when reason had brought him to a certain and prevailing point of view. His approach to information and decision making was to be totally informed and unemotional about the facts of the issue. "RH" was never found to be deficient in information or reasoning. The legal mind and broad core of culture and languages he brought with him made the AUA the most fortunate of beneficiaries.

When Dick Hannigan was originally brought in to help the late Bill Didusch "run" our annual meetings, their planning and format, we were galloping into mammouth membership numbers (one-tenth of the present) and a sprinkling of foreign guests. Imagine the whole package included such items as menus and silver screens, megaphonic microphones, glass slide and reliable movie projectors, and carbon lamps. Ash trays abounded and the clouds of smoke at times required fans, so as to enable one to see the screen.

It was soon apparent that Dick Hannigan's personal skills included a great capacity for details and a phenomenal memory, a proclivity for organization and a stable influence. These were qualities that were absolutely required to grow wholesomely for the benefit of our members and our profession.

Dick developed a staff who either cared deeply about our well-being and issues large and small and became "part of the family," or quite soon became pluperfect. I now recall, in retrospect, the 1 chore Dick found most difficult was to let someone go. But "his family" was all on the same page.

Dick and his staff adapted as our organization grew like Topsy. When a strong personality was elected to some office and had an agenda contrary to the well-being of wholesome growth, it befell our Dick to gently persuade this "reigning monarch" that it was better to have a committee decide what should be on the program "so as to bring the young men along".

One Hannigan miracle in fact seems to be to have adapted to the changing styles and agendas, work ethic and prejudices of the torrent of personalities who became elected or appointed representatives to or for the AVA and its committees. He wisely kept out of the politics of the association and dutifully imparted this pearl to his entire administrative staff.

How does this loss of such a versatile statesman impact on our organization? We have barely recited his job description. Nor does that really define the limits of Dick's value to our organization. He was in point of fact the managing editor of our various news reports, from newsletters to section officers in the sixties, to newspapers in the nineties and the ultimate communicator to every committeeman on their duties, budget and timelines.

The Didusch Museum was truly close to Dick's heart and boundless energies. He was a major contributor to the ideas and course this wonderful museum has taken, and every historian and every curator have found Dick literally indispensable. Nor can you think of history without acknowledging that Dick is our greatest historic resource and connection to our past. Although he started his career at the AUA in 1965, he absorbed much of the culture and character of the thirties, forties and fifties with his new fellow employees, Bertha Trott, Bill Didusch and Virginia Bruce. But historic resource par excellence he is!

Dick's genuineness and unfailing attention to details and perseverance made him a natural to execute superbly functions in our interest in the area of industrial relations. No one was more famous for quick turnaround of correspondence. He was as fast as the FAX long before it was invented.

Dick was the completely faithful supporter of our new executive director, the irreplaceable Jim Gallagher. Richard never regretted remaining executive secretary with the appearance of our executive director, and his relations with Mr. Gallagher remained mutually respectful, cordial and synchronous.

There was no one person more involved in the industrial and spiritual support of the International Cooperative Urologic Education (ICUE) program than former president and still health policy czar H. Logan Holtgrewe, and yet Logan would be the first to acknowledge that Dick Hannigan was the sine que non of this most laudable societal undertaking.

Dick has always been a master communicator, spoken as well as written, and this has served us and the AUA agenda very well for 3 1/2 decades - so well that precautions must be taken not to let this special AUA quality get lost.

Beyond these many skills and attributes were the gentleness, the humor and the respectful way he treated everyone. He certainly was a prompt, thorough and eloquent spokesman for our interests. But he always sought a position “behind the curtain,” mindful always that “great things can be accomplished when no one cares who gets the credit."

We will have greatest difficulty in replacing Dick's supremely accurate and bountiful memory, for he attaches events to people, having always placed the people first. Ask Dick about an event that provoked some bylaw change that I wrestled with for hours on end, and he will recite without pause, the persons, place and facts of the issue and invariably be correct.

As we approach the 100th anniversary of our organization, the absolute most precious resource we have is Dick's memory. In this regard, I have had the pleasure of interviewing Dick at length on film, and Brendan Fox has this on audiotapes so that what hits the cutting room floor on the video will not be lost. This should make the director of our centennial history project, Dr. Paul Peters, ecstatic.

I cannot help but respectfully suggest to our officers and of Directors that they consider a fitting memorial for Dick that will be prominent, permanent and vital to our continued evolvement as world's most sizable and res urological organization.

God bless you Dick, and may you and Rosa have many happy healthy years of fun and travel ahead of you!