



# The Roadrunner

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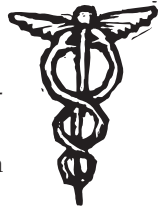
Autumn 2009



## President's Column

By Mario Pacheco, MD

It is my pleasure to serve you in my new role as President of the New Mexico Chapter of the AAFP. I have no words of wisdom or new cutting-edge strategies for advancing our interests as the historical backbone of New Mexico's health care system. I do share, however, a great enthusiasm for building upon the vital role and wonderful traditions that New Mexico's Family Physicians have established for many years through a vibrant chapter of AAFP. It is no secret that having positive relationships with Family Physician mentors serves an incredibly important role in recruiting the best and brightest students into careers in Family Medicine. During my life I have had the fortune of having had exemplary role models like Dr. John Smoker and Dr. Malcolm Morrow as my Family Physicians as a child and subsequently was influenced by outstanding Family Physician faculty at UNM like Drs. Warren Heffron, Arthur Kaufman, Bert Umland, and many, many other Family Physician role models like Drs. Alfredo Vigil, Phil Briggs, Dan Derksen, Neal Devitt, Fen Sartorius... and the list could go on and on. The point is that we, as Family Physicians, must contemplate our own path in arriving at our career choice and if our own story involves in any way having been encouraged or mentored by a Family Physician, we should consider passing that influence on to school-aged students, college students, medical students and residents.



A lot has changed in medicine since I completed my Family Medicine training, some things for the better and some things not. One thing that has not changed at all is the critical role that Family Physicians play in caring for our patients throughout New Mexico. As the number of students choosing Family Medicine has dwindled across the country, New Mexico has fared better than most states, in part because of our innovative approach to training physicians in New Mexico. I firmly believe that another contribution toward our continued relative strength in New Mexico lies in the influence that we as Family Physicians have on our students. Many Family Physicians volunteer their time talking at local schools, precepting PIE students and supervising Family Medicine residents. We should all consider doing more of this and encouraging our next generation of Family Physicians to demonstrate the same enthusiasm and commitment that so many of our own mentors and role models demonstrated to us.

I look forward to an active year with NMAFP. As in the past we will sponsor two CME conferences this year, the Winter Refresher conference in Albuquerque and the summer Annual Family Medicine Seminar in Taos. We hope to pilot accessing our Winter Refresher for a few remote sites through teleconferencing this year. In addition we are exploring how to

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## NM's Federal Delegation Braves Town Halls

By Dan Derksen, MD

A new episode for Discovery Channel's *Dangerous Jobs* is coming soon! Previous episodes included the *Dangerous Jobs* of an ultimate fighter, a snake venom extractor, and a bee remover. The next episode will feature a job that is more dangerous than any of them - the Brave Legislator at Health Reform Town Hall. Not really, but not a bad reality show idea. I was able to attend two meetings recently, one held by Senator Jeff Bingaman and another by Congressman Ben Ray Luján (NM-03).

Attending Senator Bingaman's forum well-organized and flawlessly executed New Mexico First Town Hall was reassuring, given the coarse turn many of these events have taken in other states. Perhaps because of its bipartisan origins from Senators Bingaman and Domenici many years ago, all participants had the opportunity to draft, prioritize and ask their questions.

Senator Bingaman is one of the so-called "Gang of Six" from the Senate Finance Committee trying to craft bipartisan legislation to balance the party line bills passed out the Senate Health and Education (HELP) Committee, and the House tri-committee bill (HR 3200). Senator Bingaman gave some brief remarks, including a recent Commonwealth study showing that

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## Ruidoso Conference Well Received by All

If you were not in attendance at the 52nd Annual Family Medicine Seminar this summer in Ruidoso, you missed a good one. Dr. Alfredo Vigil, Scientific Program Chair, put together an excellent CME Program with a wide variety of topical issues pertinent to Family Medicine. The Exhibit Hall had an interesting group of vendors this year (see thank you article on page 7 for list) The Welcome Reception and Awards Dinner & Dance were well attended and offered great food, wonderful entertainment and lots of camaraderie.



AAFP President, Dr. Ted Epperly with NMAFP President, Dr. Alfredo Vigil

NMAFP was pleased to have Dr. Ted Epperly, AAFP President, as their honored guest. Dr. Epperly inducted the 2010 Officers and gave a heart-warming presentation on the future of Family Medicine.

Dr. Donald Pichler, a practicing Family Physician in Albuquerque,

was awarded the Physician of the Year Award. He is uniquely equipped to handle the challenges of a broad scope of practice. Dr. Pichler believes the first line of defense in healthcare, Family Physicians have to know the tactics of a multitude of threats, from aggressive to subversive, and be ready with a plan. According to Dr. Pichler's staff, "For him, the best honor is just being witness to the many lives he has had the opportunity to be a part of in his 30 years of practicing medicine".

Dr. Sanjeev Arora received the 2009 President's Award from Dr. Alfredo Vigil (see article on page 3).

Dr. Lana K. Wagner, Assistant Professor, Department of Family & Community Medicine and Medical Director, UNM Family Medicine Clinic was awarded the 2009 Chapter Service Award. Dr. Wagner has given her valuable time and energy generously to help shape NMAFP into the strong professional organization that is today. She has served in all of the Officer positions and continues to serve on the CME Committee. The Youth & Family Indoor & Outdoor Activities Program, that will be offered every year during the NMAFP State Conference, was the brainchild of Dr. Wagner when she was the Scientific Program Chair in Taos in 2008.

NMAFP would like to thank the many members that attended this year's Conference. The 28th Annual Winter Refresher in Albuquerque will

take place on Feb. 6. (See Agenda on back panel). NMAFP will return to Taos next summer on July 22-25 for their State Conference. ■



Dr. Lana K. Wagner receiving the 2009 Chapter Service Award, from Dr. Vigil, and Sara Bittner. Lana's daughter, Sarah Tate, watches on.



Dr. Mario Pacheco being presented the President's Oath of Office by Past President, Dr. Alfredo Vigil



Packed Lecture Hall – Ruidoso Convention Center, July 16-19



Dr. Pichler, Physician of the Year, with his staff at the Awards Dinner & Dance



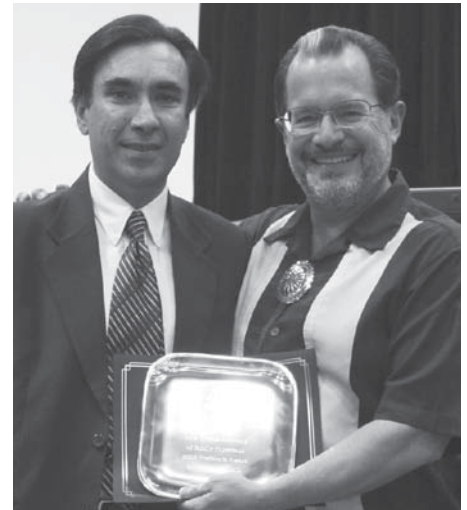
## 2009 NMAFP President's Award Given to Dr. Sanjeev Arora

The NMAFP President's Award was presented to Dr. Sanjeev Arora at the Awards Dinner & Dance during the Ruidoso State Conference in July by Dr. Alfredo Vigil. Dr. Arora is the Director of Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes). He is also Professor of Medicine, Director of the Office of Clinical Affairs, and Executive Vice Chair for the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center (UNMHSC).

Dr. Arora has been involved in management of viral hepatitis for over 15 years, and led the development and implementation of the Hepatitis C Disease Management Program at UNMHSC. Dr. Arora developed the Project ECHO model as a platform for service delivery, education and evaluation. Using video-conferencing technology and case-based learning, primary care providers

from rural and underserved areas and prisons are trained and mentored by ECHO's medical specialists to deliver best-practice management of complex health conditions in their communities or correctional institutions. A key component of the ECHO model is an innovation known as Knowledge Networks, in which the expertise of a single specialist is shared with numerous primary providers through telehealth clinics, thereby increasing access to care in rural areas without having to recruit, retain and fund additional providers.

In 2007, Project ECHO came in first among more than 300 entries from 27 countries in winning the Changemakers award. This international competition was sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson and Ashoka Foundations to identify programs that are changing the paradigm of how medicine is practiced. In 2009, Project ECHO



*Dr. Sanjeev Arora receiving the 2009 President's Award from NMAFP President, Dr. Alfredo Vigil*

received grant funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for demonstration and replication of the ECHO model as a robust paradigm to expand best practice care for vulnerable populations. ■

## NPR Broadcasts on Health Care

Letter from Greg Darrow, MD

I was recently privileged to have a conversation with the folks from National Public Radio (NPR) about the changing face of health care in America.

NPR interviewed more than 40 physicians before settling on 6 to participate in their series.

After speaking with the show's producer for about 45 minutes initially, I was contacted the following day and told that I was one of the lucky few who'd be interviewed.

As I traveled to Wisconsin, I arranged to have my interview conducted at the studios of Wisconsin Public Radio in Madison on Monday.

I was prepped on radio etiquette and had a 5-minute conversation with the host, Melissa Block, as they were preparing the other participant (a surgeon). I learned that Melissa's husband had just traveled to Corrales for a Scrabble tournament one week ago. Such a small world.

Once the program started, the interview was "all business" and the questions were probing and thoughtful. I had an

opportunity to make strong cases for many important issues involving Family Physicians: the need for a medical home; the need for better compensation for cognitive versus procedural knowledge; the need for longitudinal care emphasizing disease prevention and disease state management; a more streamlined method of care delivery reducing costs that contribute nothing to patient care (high administrative costs of health plans, health plan marketing budgets, ridiculous competition among health plans that simply duplicates services); the need to recruit and retain Family Physicians to rural areas and how to lower the burden of medical education so that more students choose primary care careers.

At one point, my surgical colleague even agreed — on air — that there was a serious discrepancy between compensation for a Family Physician adjusting care for patients across a time continuum versus a proceduralist simply intubating an orifice for 25 minutes and dictating a report (for a fee of over 10X what a Family Physician would

earn for the same amount of time spent).

I was also able to speak to the issue of patient advocacy and told the audience that I felt that Family Physicians, regardless of "production pressure" from health plans, could be relied upon to consistently provide personalized care for their patients. I indicated that any long range plan under consideration would be best served by having Family Physicians as integral members. I emphasized that it has been conclusively shown by several studies that health care by Family Physicians is of higher quality and of lower cost than that provided by our colleagues in other disciplines and that America must continue to have (and to value) its Family Physicians.

I was gratified to have been asked to participate and it was a privilege to advocate strongly for Family Medicine in particular and primary care in general during the program. It aired on "All Things Considered". My interview is archived in the NPR data base for future reference. Anyone wishing to listen may simply access the NPR website and find it there. I hope that my comments will help in some small way as our leaders face difficult choices about how health care will take shape going forward. ■



## Envision NM – Pediatric Quality Improvement

By Jane McGrath, MD UNM Department of Pediatrics

**E**nvision New Mexico (ENM) is a pediatric quality improvement program at the University of New Mexico, Department of Pediatrics. ENM works with primary care practices and school-based health centers (SBHC) across the state using telehealth technology accessed and maintained by UNM Project ECHO.

Envision New Mexico offers the only American Board of Pediatrics accredited program in New Mexico towards board certification (maintenance of certification – MOC) in pediatric overweight management and developmental screening. SBHC quality improvement initiatives include behavioral health, overweight management, community outreach, and best practices in primary care. The Teen Lifestyle Change program (TLC) offers overweight teens in school and community settings an opportunity to learn about nutrition and ways to improve health through lifestyle behaviors. Facilitators TLC are trained by ENM.

ENM telehealth programs link multiple pediatric sub-specialists with primary care providers for consultation on the care of children and



adolescents in the areas of pediatric overweight and obesity (COMM-TC), Developmental Screening (DSI), and pediatric nutrition (PNT). Providers receive cohesive, multifaceted, and expert advice on challenging cases. Patients receive specialty-level care in their primary health care setting. Continuing Medical Education (CME) credit is available for each session.

- **Childhood Overweight Medical Management Telehealth Consultation (COMM-TC)** offers primary care providers an opportunity to seek input on the evaluation and management of their overweight pediatric patients. Increasingly, primary care providers must address both the challenging socio-behavioral aspects of obesity, as well as the daunting medical management that often includes complex co-morbid conditions. Consultants available to supply expertise include: Endocrinology, Pediatric Nephrology, Pediatric Cardiology, Pediatric Hepatology, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Pediatric Nutrition, and Clinical Social Work (Motivational Interviewing).

- **Developmental Screening Initiative (DSI)** promotes the use of

standardized developmental screening tools and appropriate referral to ensure that no child reaches kindergarten with an undiagnosed developmental disability. The DSI lecture series (DSI-LS) is provided via telehealth. Consultation and training with individual primary care practices and providers is also available.

- **Pediatric Nutrition Telehealth Community of Care (PNT)** focuses on the professional skill development of local nutrition providers in an effort to expand access to medical nutrition therapy (MNT) in rural and underserved areas through formal didactic sessions on pertinent topics and comprehensive clinical consultations by registered dietitians with expertise in pediatric nutrition.

Typical sessions for all ENM telehealth programs begin with a 20-30 minute didactic on a relevant topic. Case presentations and stimulating discussion follow. Providers may choose to present their own case, have the facilitator make the initial presentation for them, or simply listen and learn from the cases presented. Contact Kirsten Bennett at [kdbennett@salud.unm.edu](mailto:kdbennett@salud.unm.edu) for more information on available telehealth programs.

To learn more about Envision New Mexico, visit [envisionnm.org](http://envisionnm.org) or call 505-925-7600. ■

## Local Family Physician Awarded Prestigious Teaching Honor

By Saverio Sava, MD

**S**antiago Macias, MD, a practicing Family Physician in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is among a select group of physicians honored by the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation for his commitment to education in the field of Family Medicine. Dr. Macias was selected to receive the 2009 Pfizer Teacher Development Award based on his scholastic achievement, leadership qualities and dedication to Family Medicine.

"As a residency program director for several years, having part-time, community-based Family Physician colleagues com-



mitted to teaching and mentoring residents and students is vital to our program and to our medical school. I applaud the efforts of these award winners for their dedication to the values of Family Medicine and to teaching the next generation of physicians. In addition, I am very thankful for Pfizer's continued commitment in this area," said Mark H. Belfer, D.O., AAFP Foundation President.

The \$1,500 award recognizes community-based physicians who teach Family Medicine on a part-time basis. The award provides funding for each recipient to

attend an activity of choice to further their professional development and teaching skills.

Dr. Macias earned his medical degree from University of New Mexico School of Medicine, and is a graduate of the University of New Mexico Family and Community Medicine Residency Program, where he is currently a part-time instructor. Dr. Macias will be recognized for this achievement during a ceremony held by his teaching center.

The AAFP Foundation, which administers the Pfizer Teacher Development Award, is the philanthropic arm of the American Academy of Family Physicians. The AAFP Foundation advances the values of Family Medicine by promoting humanitarian, educational and scientific initiatives that improve the health of all people. Please visit [www.aafpfoundation.org](http://www.aafpfoundation.org) for more information. ■

## Family Medicine Interest Group Still Nurturing Big Dreams in Small Communities with Medical STARS

By Bridget Lynch, Elena Bissell, and Erin Corriveau

The UNM SOM Family Medicine Interest Group's Medical S.T.A.R.S (Medical Scholars Teaching Area Rural Students) program is working with the NMAFP to keep the pipeline into Family Medicine a'flowing! Three years ago the NMAFP board decided to support a large FMIG project and as a result, the Medical S.T.A.R.S. project was born. Annual support from the NMAFP has enabled over 150 UNM medical students to go out during their summer Practical Immersion Experience (PIE) and utilize the Medical S.T.A.R.S. curriculum to affect the lives of over 600 primary and secondary school aged children in rural communities of New Mexico.

The program educates high school,

middle school and elementary students about the need for more health care providers in their community and it gives the students insight into the fact they are actually the best candidates to fill this need. The curriculum intends to enlighten these students that coming from a rural community works to their advantage when pursuing scholarships and entrance to higher education programs. This program teaches the students the nuts and bolts of preparing oneself for entrance into higher education of any sort, informing them about college entrance exams, applying for federal financial aid and the application process for scholarships and general college admission. The



program strives also to individualize the message and communicate to each student that they have the potential to help themselves gain access to this dream. Each student is provided with a "how to packet" which details the information presented to her or him through this program and the medical students also serve as continuous mentors for interested students.

We are trying to affect the lives of many rural New Mexican youth and it is quite rewarding to hear students say things such as "This speaker changed my way of thinking," or "I am thinking about being a doctor even more now." Part of our presentation is to have medical providers from the area come in and speak to the kids about what they enjoy about their job. If you are interested in joining this effort to keep the pipeline gushing, please contact the Medical S.T.A.R.S. team by e-mailing us at [familydoctor@newmexico.com](mailto:familydoctor@newmexico.com). ■

## Resident Update

By Jennifer Southard, MD

Greetings Residents! Things have been wonderfully busy for residents and students at both the local and national level.

The 52nd Annual NMAFP Family Medicine Seminar was held in Ruidoso from July 16-19, and had over 10 residents in attendance. The NMAFP graciously provides conference attendance FREE to all resident attendees. Mark your calendar for the Winter Refresher and next year's Annual Seminar, to be held in Taos!

The NM Chapter also sponsored my (and two medical students') attendance at the Residents and Students National Conference in Kansas City, July 30 – August 1, 2009. The theme of this year's conference was "Health Policy: Building A Better Health Care System." I was honored to serve as the NM Delegate to

the 2009 National Congress of Family Medicine Residents (NCFMR), and to chair a Reference Committee. The Congress considered 23 resolutions (of which NM co-authored four), on topics ranging from re-evaluating continuity clinic requirements to endorsing a public plan option in health care reform. A total of 14 resolutions were adopted and one resolution was reaffirmed. You can find a news story about the action of the congress on the National Conference Web site at [www.aafp.org/nc](http://www.aafp.org/nc).

In addition to helping shape resolutions and action plans for our national AAFP, recruiting medical students was a large portion of time dedicated to the NC. Over 400 medical students and over 600 residents were in attendance. It was a fabulous opportunity to meet and work beside other colleagues across the nation who are passionate about Family Medicine.

When we left the conference I was

challenged to ask my fellow residents to consider donating to FamMedPAC, our academy's political action committee. Check out the details on the web site [www.aafp.org/fammedpac](http://www.aafp.org/fammedpac). This PAC advocates for the legislative policies that we adopt as resolutions at the NCFMR. It is a way to contribute to policy making directed specifically at what we as Family Physicians deem important.

Congratulations to all the new interns who have joined our local AAFP chapter. I encourage everyone to get involved with our local and national academy. You can begin by joining, checking out our web-site and joining in any discussion groups that suit your interest. Your log-in is your AAFP member number and the password is your last name. <http://familydoctormn.org/resident.html>. Contact me at [JSouthard@salud.unm.edu](mailto:JSouthard@salud.unm.edu) if you have any problems.

Hope to see many of you at future NMAFP events! ■

## Medical Student Interest in Family Medicine: an Essential Component to Healthcare Reform

By Brittany Albright, Class of 2012

According to the AAFP, in the past decade, 90 percent of US medical school graduates have entered sub-specialties. With only 10 percent of students choosing primary care, there is an escalating shortage of general practitioners. Ted Epperly, MD, President of AAFP, stated, "On the eve of (health care) reform, we have a very real primary care crisis."

One of the main solutions to the growing scarcity of primary care physicians is to increase medical student interest in Family Medicine early in their education. To be part of the solution, the New Mexico Academy of Family Physicians generously sponsored four University of New Mexico medical students to attend the 52nd Annual Family Medicine Seminar in Ruidoso this July.

Being a second-year medical student, my specialty of choice changes weekly depending on how interesting the lectures are. It was not until attending the seminar and having personal interactions with Family Physicians, attending enlightening lectures, and learning about the passion and empathy these physicians feel for their patients, that I realized how integral and valuable Family Medicine is to our healthcare system. I left the seminar with the perception that Family Medicine is the patient's caring home within a complex and intimidating medical system.

For the future of our healthcare system, it is vital to increase medical student interest in primary care. One solution is for more Family Medicine physicians to become involved

in medical students' education. Aside from serving as a clinical teacher or lecturer, Family Medicine physicians can serve as volunteer faculty members and be students' mentors and role models. Instead of teaching students how to diagnose and treat illnesses, it is important for primary care physicians to show students how they genuinely care for their patients and put the entire family unit into perspective. By witnessing sentimental, multi-generational patient interactions, students can comprehend the powerful impact continuity of care can have on patients' lives.

I am very fortunate to have received glimpses into the dedicated, compassion-filled lives of Family Medicine physicians by attending the NMAFP seminar. Hearing about their love and respect for the families they care for made me aspire to be like them. ■



## World Family Doctors Meet In England

By Narissa Koehn, MD

WONCA is the acronym for the World Organization of Family Doctors – a worldwide organization of individuals, academic institutions, and organizations of general practitioners and Family Physicians. As members of the New Mexico Academy of Family Physicians (NMAFP) and American Academy of Family Physi-



Representatives from the United States to WWPWFM: Dr. Noemi Doohan, Santa Barbara, CA; Dr. Lucy Candib, Worcester, MA; Dr. Eleni O'Donovan, Washington, DC, and Dr. Nerissa Koehn, Zuni, NM.

cians (AAFP), we are all automatically members of WONCA. WONCA was created to bring family doctors together from around the world to improve the health and quality of life of the patients we serve. Enhancing the principle of gender equity in our personal and professional lives is one of the best ways we, as Family Physicians, can work to promote this goal.

This and other key concepts were discussed at the WONCA Working Party on Women and Family Medicine (WWPWFM) meeting in Norwich, England June 28-July 3rd. The WWPWFM was formally established at the 16th International Conference of WONCA in Durban, South Africa in 2001. Its goal is to promote the equity of women as a key determinant of all aspects of health, in line with the 2015 Millenium Goals put forth by the United Nations which include “empowerment of women and promotion of equality between women and men.” Since its inception,

the members of the WWPWFM have worked to make WONCA a model for gender equity and integrate a gender perspective in all its policies, scientific meetings, projects, research, and legislation.

This year’s working party meeting was attended by forty women from eighteen different countries, including

places as far away as Fiji, Uganda, and the United Arab Emirates. In addition, for the first time, an effort was made to have half of the participants from each WONCA region be “emerging leaders,” women in the early stages of their Family Medicine careers, to encourage mentorship and role modeling. This group discovered its own unique

and developed several new initiatives, including:

- Developing a LEAD (Leadership and mentorship, Education, Advancing Family Medicine, and Development and careers) statement addressing specific goals in each of these areas for young female Family Physicians
- Creating an international exchange program where members of the WWPWFM agree to host and mentor women from other parts of the world who have an interest or career in Family Medicine
- Collecting examples of stories from female Family Physicians around the world describing why they chose their field, what their work is like, and the struggles they have faced or why they have been successful in maintaining a balance between their personal and professional lives
- Working to recognize a formal position for representation of early

career family practitioners within the WWPWFM and WONCA Executive

- Formalizing proposals for workshops and presentations to be given at the 2010 Triennial WONCA meeting in Cancun, Mexico by early-career female Family Physicians

An overview of the work the WWPWFM has accomplished can be viewed at their website, [www.womenandfamilymedicine.com](http://www.womenandfamilymedicine.com). If any members of the NMAFP are interested in participating in or learning more about the international exchange program or collection of personal stories by female Family Physicians described above, please let me know. In addition, I would encourage everyone to consider attending the 2010 Triennial WONCA meeting which will be held in Cancun, Mexico May 19-23rd. The title of the Triennial Meeting is “The Millenium Development Goals: The Contribution of Family Medicine” and more information about the conference can be found at [www.wonca2010cancun.com](http://www.wonca2010cancun.com). The deadline for submission of abstracts is August 31st. ■

*Dr. Nerissa Koehn has worked as a Family Physician in the Indian Health Service for the past six years. She is currently the Director of Women’s Health at the Zuni Comprehensive Community Health Center in Zuni, NM. She would like to thank the NMAFP for providing financial support in order to help her attend the WWPWFM meeting. She can be reached at [nerissa.koehn@ihs.gov](mailto:nerissa.koehn@ihs.gov).*

## President’s Column

(continued from page 1)

offer SAMS at our Taos conference in support of the re-certification process for the American Board of Family Medicine. Furthermore we will sponsor the AAFP Multi-State Forum in Dallas in February. As always, we welcome your input and depend on your continued engagement with AAFP as we advocate for issues that will improve the health status of our population here in New Mexico. ■

## NM's Federal Delegation Braves Town Halls

(continued from page 1)

more than one in three Americans was without health insurance for more than three months last year, and that New Mexico (23%) is second only to Texas (24%) in percentage of its population that is uninsured. He emphasized the key points of health reform legislation – to get Americans insured, to make sure people aren't dropped from health plans when they become sick, and to control the excess cost growth of health insurance including commercial insurance as well as that through current public entitlements including Medicare and Medicaid. The 200 attendees then broke into small groups, facilitated to allow everyone equal opportunity to speak, formulate and prioritize questions. Senator Bingaman then met again with the entire group, and fielded questions from each of the smaller groups.

Three highlights emerged. First, Senator Bingaman stated his preference for passing a bipartisan bill out of the Finance Committee. The three Republicans (Chuck Grassley -Iowa, Mike Enzi – Wyoming, and Olympia Snowe – Maine) and three Democrats (Kent Conrad – ND, Jeff Bingaman NM, and Max Baucus – Montana) have been working for some time on a bipartisan bill. That might mean giving up on the “public option” for health insurance coverage, and inserting a health insurance cooperative plan instead. Senator Bingaman strongly supports the public option, but would give that up in exchange for bipartisan support.

If the Finance Committee cannot pass a bipartisan bill out, it might be difficult for the Senate to get the 60 votes necessary to stop a filibuster, once a bill is passed out of the Senate Finance Committee and reconciled with the bill passed out of the Senate HELP Committee before the August break.

The second item of interest was Senator Bingaman's willingness to

support getting health reform through Congress through a parliamentary procedure – budget reconciliation – if a bipartisan bill can't be done. It's what partisans call the “nuclear option” passed with a simple majority of votes (50 votes plus Vice President Biden's tiebreaker).

Finally, one group asked for a show of hands by the 200 attendees of those supporting a public option. The very large majority attending voted for including a public option.

Congressman Ben Ray Luján (NM-03) held a number of meetings to elicit constituent feedback. Meeting in Santa Fe with a group of health providers, it was clear that he had been carefully studying the House version of the bill (HR 3200), as the 1,017 pages were dog-eared, with color tabs to get to key sections quickly. He gave some introductory remarks, but spent most of the time listening to concerns and suggestions. One attendee pointed out that there is no tort reform in the bill, and that defensive medicine alone costs about what it would cost to provide health insurance for every American. While New Mexico has a model Medical Malpractice Act, it is under yearly attack, underscoring the importance of federal reform.

Another person expressed concern about those with disabilities and making sure long term care and rehabilitation were adequately funded. I emphasized the importance of assuring an adequate health workforce if we are able to get everyone health insurance. New Mexico is short almost 400 primary care physicians, is 49th out of 50 states in per capita dentists, and access to primary medical and dental, as well as specialty care is challenging. Legislative provisions to align federal subsidies of health professions education with clearly defined outcomes are critical to assuring an adequate workforce, balancing training both within tertiary hospitals in large cities, with training in the community and in rural sites.

No one yelled, “keep your government hands off my Medicare” as

was heard in a Simpsonville town hall meeting in another state, and reported in the Washington Post. Opportunities for reform emerge like cicadas once every 13 or 17 years. There's been a lot of health reform buzzing in Washington and in every state. At times, like a swarm of cicadas in the summer, the noise can be deafening.

I have been impressed by how thoughtful our federal delegation has been related to health reform – including Senators Udall and Bingaman, and Representatives Teague, Lujan, and Heinrich.

Over four hundred thousand uninsured New Mexicans are depending on their courage. ■



## THANKS to Ruidoso Vendors & Co-Sponsors

*NMAFP is very appreciative to the following for their support at the 52nd Annual Family Medicine Seminar that took place July 16-19, 2009 in Ruidoso:*

### Vendors:

American Physicians Assurance Corp.  
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Health Policy at UNM

New Mexico Chapter  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
2400 Louisiana Blvd. NE, Bldg. 2, Suite 101  
Albuquerque, NM 87110

## NMAFP 28th Annual Winter Refresher in Albuquerque

Saturday, February 6, 2010, Embassy Suites Hotel

Sally Bachofer, M.D., Scientific Program Chair

This Program will be Accredited by AAFP and will be worth 10 Prescribed Credits

There will be 1 Post Test worth 3 additional Prescribed Credits

7:00 – 8:00 AM: . . . . .	Past President's Breakfast Agave Room	11:30 AM – 12:30 PM . . . . .	"Starting Insulin: Why? Who? When? Where? What to Teach and What to Avoid" Kathleen Colleran, M.D.
7:00 – 8:00 AM . . . . .	Registration/Exhibits Open Continental Breakfast Exhibit Hall	12:30 – 1:30 PM . . . . .	Lunch – Exhibit Hall
7:55 – 8:00 AM . . . . .	Introduction & Welcome Mario Pacheco, M.D., NMAFP President Sally Bachofer, M.D., NMAFP President-Elect	1:30 – 2:30 PM . . . . .	"STD Update" Bruce Trigg, M.D.
8:00 – 9:00 AM . . . . .	"A View from Inside the Health Care Reform Sausage Factory" Tina Trott, M.D.	2:30 – 3:30 pm . . . . .	"H1N1 Update" Karen Armitage, M.D. and Michael Landen, M.D.
9:00 – 10:00 AM . . . . .	"Screening & Treating OAB" (EB CME) Geoffrey Leung, M.D.	3:30 – 4:30 PM . . . . .	"A Family Physician's Guide to Treating Depression in the Minority Patient" (EB CME) Felisha Rohan-Minjares, M.D.
10:00 – 10:30 AM . . . . .	Break – Exhibit Hall	4:30 PM . . . . .	Drawing for Door Prizes A raffle ticket will be included in your packet. <u>You must be present to win.</u>
10:30 – 11:30 am . . . . .	"Practical Approaches Toward Improving Immunization Across the Spectrum of Age-Appropriate Patients" (EB CME) Doug Campos-Outcalt, M.D., MPA		



## The Roadrunner

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