



Volume 8 • Issue 1 • Winter 2018

# No Bones About it Time to Re-evaluate?



**President Stanley Tao, MD**

It is hard to believe that spring is just around the corner! It feels like we just ushered in 2018. As this newsletter is published, our Academy meeting will be in New Orleans in March. For those of you going, feel free to let this board know of any new issues or concerns that would benefit our membership.

I thought I would concentrate on the opioid problem we have in West Virginia in this issue. Granted, we are not the only state with this problem, but unfortunately we do lead the nation in some unfortunate statistics.

Orthopedic injuries hurt. Non-surgical management of orthopedic injuries often hurt. Orthopedic surgeries hurt. We, as specialists, in taking care

of these injuries, need to be aware of how opioids should be utilized in these injuries and also of their potential adverse consequences.

The American Enterprise Institute has done research on how serious a problem opioid abuse can be. This is a conservative think tank based in Washington D.C. West Virginia has the highest per capita economic burden from this crisis. The opioid epidemic is costing West Virginia's economy an estimated \$8.8 **billion** a year. That is one-eighth of our total economy. This includes spending on health care and substance abuse treatment, criminal justice costs and lost worker productivity, as well as the burden of fatal overdoses.

West Virginia's economic burden from the opioid crisis comes to \$4,793 per resident. We also dedicate the largest share of our gross domestic product to costs related to this epidemic. This is a staggering 12%, more than double any other state.

**Re-evaluate?** More on page 7

## In This Issue:

- **President's notes: Time to Re-evaluate?**
- **The Final View from K2**
- **Duct Tape and Gorilla Glue Orthopaedics**
- **Play Bingo, Help OREF**
- **Joshua Tuck Scholarship**
- **2018 TKA FAQs**

# The Final View From K2

**"Technology is a  
useful servant,  
but a dangerous  
master."**

**- Christian Louis  
Lange**

As my tenure as West Virginia's Councilor for the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons comes to a close, I have a couple of departing thoughts. Since beginning my practice in the mid-Ohio Valley in 1986, the paradigm shifts in health care have been rather troublesome. As stated in earlier "View from K2" articles, data has replaced the patient as king. As most of us have experienced, the EHR has been for the most part an inefficient mandate. Our time now is spent in front of the computer instead of listening to and touching the patient. This is not the good medicine we were taught to practice.

A study recently published in JAMA shows that the EHR has increased the cost of IT by \$30 billion, with no improvement of administrative efficiency. This doesn't even include OUR time wasted using computers to manage the EHR in taking care of patients. Over the past seven years, my time alone was worth approximately one billion dollars (I'm expensive). As stated in

previous "Views," time is our only nonrenewable resource. The poor utilization of valuable healthcare resources for data points that often have little to do with enhancing patient care is draining us of both time and resources.

Also increasing the cost of healthcare is the number of practices being employed by hospitals or health systems, as reported by the Brookings Institution. Funneling physician care through hospital systems has increased the cost of healthcare by 8% over the past 20 years. In the Mid-Ohio Valley, from an orthopaedic viewpoint, I have witnessed an increase in the ordering of many unnecessary tests, thus adding additional costs to the system. As I have mentioned over the past couple of years, physicians need to show better stewardship of the healthcare dollar (government, insurance and patients) if we are ever going to get a handle on healthcare costs. As the primary care givers for the musculoskeletal system,

**Own It**

More on page 7



# Spring Break Meeting April 13-14

We have a great meeting set for April 13 and 14 at The Stonewall Jackson Resort. The theme of this year's meeting is "Duct Tape and Gorilla Glue Orthopaedics: Handling Unexpected Intraoperative Complications."

Brett Whitfield, Aaron Sopp and Manny Molina have put together an outstanding program that will help us avoid and recover from unexpected problems in our practices. You'll receive the program shortly, and registration is open online at [www.wvos.org](http://www.wvos.org).

[Hotel reservations can be made online](#) by **March 19** at Stonewall Resort.

The Friday April 13 portion of the meeting will begin at 8:00 am with registration, followed by a presentation from 8:30-10:00 on "Laws That Impact Physicians." Following a break, the Physicians Mutual will provide a risk management course (required for premium discounts). Golf will follow for those interested with dinner

on your own at Stillwaters. A boat ride is available in the evening followed by Bingo and a Silent Auction to benefit the Orthopaedic Research and Education Foundation. If you have an item to donate, please contact Diane Slaughter at the WVOS office.

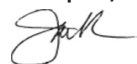
Saturday will have a clinical focus and we have an excellent array of local experts to enhance our program. We will have our annual business meeting immediately following lunch on Saturday. The WVU and Marshall Orthopedic resident presentations will follow with the membership voting to determine the "best" presentations. The top papers will receive a monetary award.

We will be supported once again by our vendors who help to underwrite the program. They will have booths available with time for us to talk with them. Please encourage your pharmaceutical and device suppliers to participate.

This is a great opportunity to obtain valuable, pertinent, convenient and economical CME. More importantly it is an opportunity to interact with your fellow West Virginia and surrounding Orthopods.

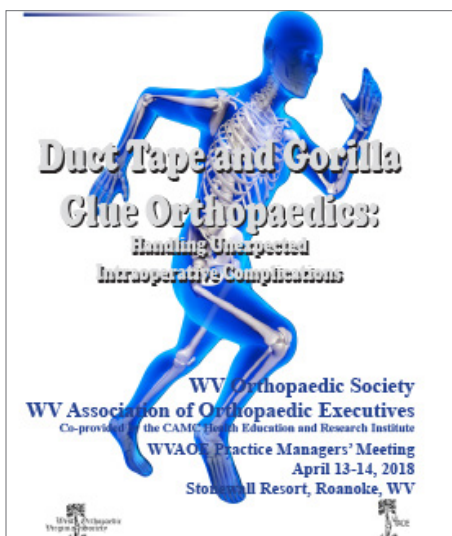
The WV Association of Orthopaedic Executives will not be meeting this spring.

I look forward to seeing you in April,



Jack Steel

Join us for  
"Duct Tape and  
Gorilla Glue  
Orthopaedics"  
April 13-14 at  
Stonewall  
Resort.



# So Many Ways to Support OREF!

**Play bingo,  
bid on silent  
auction items  
and support  
OREF!**

The Orthopaedic Research and Education Foundation (OREF) is the organization that supports both Orthopaedic basic and clinical research along with an educational emphasis. Contributing to OREF is an opportunity for the practicing Orthopedist to assist with the advancement of our field.

West Virginia has had two 20+ year donors and it would nice to see that number increase; no donation is too small. You can go to the OREF website ([www.oref.org](http://www.oref.org)) to see the list of donors, donate and learn more about the organization's commitment to our specialty.

Over the past few years, we've hosted a Texas Hold 'em tournament at the Spring Break Meeting to raise funds for the OREF, and our contribution has been over \$1,000 annually. This year, we're doing something a little bit different to involve the whole family. We're playing bingo and hosting a silent auction Friday evening.

Admission to the bingo game is \$10 per person and

there will be small prizes to game winners. Your \$10 fee will cover 20 games. We will have additional bingo cards and daubers for sale for the real bingo pros!

In addition, we will be having a silent auction throughout the evening. Current donations include a family of wooden Halloween friends for your porch, a rearing Hippogriff re-purposed wooden puzzle for the Harry Potter fans in the crowd and a Blenko vase. We are working on securing autographed sports memorabilia from both Marshall University and West Virginia University, as well. If you have an item to donate, please contact Diane Slaughter at the WVOS office.

It should be a great evening for the whole family, so bring your bingo gear and your checkbook and make a great contribution to the OREF. Thank you,



Jack R. Steel, MD  
WV OREF Ambassador





# Joshua Tuck Scholarship Formed

The West Virginia Association of Orthopaedic Executives (WVAOE) is pleased to announce the establishment of the Joshua Tuck Scholarship.

Joshua Alan Tuck 30, died on May 8, 2017, from injuries sustained in an automobile accident on the West Virginia Turnpike. He was the Vice President of the West Virginia Association of Orthopaedic Executives at the time of his death.

Joshua received his undergraduate degree at Concord University and his MBA from the University of Charleston, graduating at the top of his class. Josh was the Administrator at Charleston Area Medical Center Department of Orthopaedic Surgery where he volunteered on his lunch breaks giving brown bag lunches to family members of ICU patients. He received the Heart and Soul Award for the CAMC Hospital System as an extraordinary employee. Josh was a very vibrant and ambitious young man.

The Joshua Tuck Scholarship was created by the WVAOE Board of Directors to help support a student studying healthcare management. We want to honor his memory by assisting the education of someone who is working towards a healthcare management degree who embodies Joshua's vision. Applicants must be (1) West Virginia high school seniors;

(2) must enroll in Bluefield State College, Fairmont State University, Marshall University or WVU Tech; (3) major in a healthcare management program (4) submit a 450 – 500 word essay answering the question: "Describe your community's issues with opioids and explain how you would reduce the problem."

From the applications received, the WVAOE Board of Directors will select a single one-time only \$2500.00 scholarship recipient.

While we are able to fund the 2018 scholarship, we need your help to make this scholarship possible for years to come. We can accept personal or corporate checks. Please call the WVAOE office if you need to make a donation by credit card. This donation is currently deductible as a business expense.

Please help us honor Josh's life and legacy by making your check to WVAOE and including Josh Tuck Scholarship in the memo line.



**WVAOE is  
honoring  
Joshua Tuck's  
legacy with a  
scholarship.  
You can  
contribute to  
keep this going  
for the future!**

# 2018 Total Knee Arthroplasty FAQs

[Visit this](#)  
[address](#) the see  
the full  
document.

Until recently, total knee arthroplasty (TKA) was included on the Medicare inpatient-only (IPO) list. In light of the removal of TKA from the IPO, we are providing answers to some frequently asked questions. It will be updated continually, as questions arise. Please find the most up to date information on the AAOS website, here. For additional questions, please contact Dena McDonough, Manager of Payment Policy at [mcdonough@aaos.org](mailto:mcdonough@aaos.org).

## **Q1: What does removal from the IPO mean?**

A1: Medicare classifies a procedure as “inpatient-only” based, in part, on the expectation that a stay of at least two midnights would be medically necessary. CMS uses established criteria to review the IPO list on an annual basis for determining whether any procedures should be removed from the list. Medicare explicitly states that removal of a procedure from the IPO list does not require the procedure to be performed only on an outpatient basis. It simply allows for the possibility in appropriate instances. The removal from the IPO allows for both hospital outpatient and inpatient care. The procedure is still not approved for ambulatory surgery centers (ASC). Addition to the ASC-approved list is a separate decision that Medicare may revisit in the future.

## **Q2: What is the effect on TKAs by removal from the IPO?**

A2: Removal of the TKA procedure from the IPO list allows for payment in either the inpatient setting or the hospital outpatient setting. Medicare still expects most TKAs to be performed on an inpatient basis. There is a small subset of patients that could appropriately receive outpatient TKAs. It is for this minority of patients that Medicare is removing the requirement of inpatient surgery. Providers will continue to be required to document the reason for inpatient status, but that documentation need not be any different from what has been required for the past few years. There is no need to justify why a procedure is not being performed as an outpatient.

We have heard of some issues surrounding preauthorization for Medicare Advantage (MA) patients. There seems to be a forceful push to default TKAs to the outpatient setting, assuming many cases will, ultimately, be converted to inpatients. Unfortunately, CMS allows MA discretion in coverage determination. We will continue to push for CMS intervention on minimum coverage standards.

To read the remaining 11 questions and answers, visit <http://wvos.org/2018-total-knee-arthroplasty-faqs/>.

## Own it

orthopaedic surgeons must take ownership to help reign in these costs.

In closing, as an orthopaedic surgeon of 32 years, I have seen technology be a double-edged sword. In the operating room, it has enhanced my ability to attain better outcomes for my patients. In the office, technology, such as the EMR,

## Continued from pg. 2

has been a bureaucratic disaster that has added additional cost to the system and has taken me away from my patients. Only time will tell if we can find a happy medium between utilizing the latest technology and at the same time allowing us to focus on the most important variable, the patient.

---

## Re-evaluate? Continued from pg. 1

A study by WVU estimated \$322 million in lost productivity due to overdose fatalities, \$316 million in lost productivity due to addicts not working, and more than \$320 million in costs treating the epidemic. West Virginia has the highest drug overdose death rate in the country. In 2016, 881 people fatally overdosed in our state.

Opioids obviously have a role in the care of our patients. Fortunately most of our patients only need opioids for short-term treatment of pain from injuries. All too often, short-term treatment can lead to long-term dependence. The CDC estimates 11.2% of the adult US population suffers from chronic pain. From 1999 to 2014, more than 165,000 persons died from opioid overdose. In 2013 alone, an estimated 1.9 million persons abused or were dependent on prescription opioid pain medicine.

Recent changes to laws on prescribing opioids are already in our area. My practice borders

Ohio where our surgery center is located. We are only allowed to prescribe seven days of opioids with a prescription. I was shown data during the recent Health Care Summit meeting at The Greenbrier in 2017 that addiction potential can increase in as few as five days after starting an opioid and that a majority of prescriptions written after surgery result in a vast quantity of unused pills.

These recent events and research have allowed me to re-evaluate my prescribing habits for patients with orthopedic injuries. I am certainly writing for fewer opioid pills at a time and having discussions with patients before the prescription is written about expectations of duration and quantity. This has generally been received well with patients. We should all do our small part to help educate and help our patients and hopefully reverse the position in which West Virginia finds itself in 2018.

**Recent events  
have allowed  
me to  
re-evaluate my  
prescribing  
habits.**

**President**

Stanley Tao, MD  
Huntington, WV  
304.525.6905

**Vice President**

Felix Cheung, MD  
Huntington, WV  
304.691.1262

**Secretary-Treasurer**

Shafic Sraj, MD  
Weston, WV  
shaficsrajmd@gmail.com

**Immediate Past President**

Brett Whitfield, MD  
Beckley, WV  
304.253.1077

**At-large Members**

Christopher Courtney, DO  
Bridgeport, WV  
330.717.8094  
Matthew Dietz, MD  
Morgantown, WV  
304.285.7444  
Charles (Ted) Shuff, MD  
Charleston, WV  
304.344.3551  
Vivek Neginhal, MD  
Huntington, WV  
304.525.6905

**AAOS Councilor**

Greg B. Krivchenia, MD  
New Martinsville, WV  
740.373.8756

**Advocacy Chairman**

Joseph Prud'homme, MD  
Morgantown, WV  
304.293.2779

**Legislative Chairman**

Richard (Ret) Topping, MD  
Elkins, WV  
304.637.4509

**Membership Chairman**

Tony Majestro, MD  
Charleston, WV  
304.343.4691

**Program Chairman**

Jack Steel, MD  
Huntington, WV  
304.525.6905

**Ex Officio Members**

Sanford Emery, MD, MBA  
Morgantown, WV  
304.293.1170  
Ali Oliashirazi, MD  
Huntington, WV  
304.697.7114  
Phillip Bostian, MD  
Morgantown, WV  
304.293.1168  
Dana Lycans, MD  
Huntington, WV  
304.631.1262

**Executive Director**

Diane Slaughter, CAE, APR, Fellow PRSA  
PO Box 13604  
Charleston, WV 25360  
304.345.7561  
wvos@frontier.com

Being an **AAOS Congressional Ambassador** is easy as ABC...

**A**lert

**Alert** your Member of Congress

*Surveys show that what breaks through the noise is a message from a trusted constituent and community member. Send alerts from AAOS that are brief and informative.*

**B**ond

**Bond** with your Member of Congress

*You have more in common than you may realize. You both care about the people in your area and good public policy. Use that.*

- Develop a relationship with staff.
- Meet with them in person in the district or DC.
- Get their cell phone number.
- Volunteer to be on their campaign committee.
- Attend or host a fundraiser (the AAOS PAC can help).
- Write an op-ed or letter to the editor supportive of their positions.



**Be C**onsistent

Be **Consistent** with your Member of Congress

*Regular and consistent contact is the key to relationship building with a Member of Congress.*

- Get on their e-newsletter list.
- Participate in a tele-town hall.
- Participate in an in-person town hall or campaign rally.
- Like them on Facebook.
- Follow them on twitter.
- Tweet comments, photos or quotes from them.

**I WANT YOU**

**For AAOS Congressional Ambassador**

If you're ready to make your voice heard in Washington, sign up to be an AAOS Congressional Ambassador! To learn more contact Jordan Vivian, AAOS Manager of Government Relations at [vivian@aaos.org](mailto:vivian@aaos.org).



<http://advocacy.aaos.org>

No Bones About It  
is published four times a year by the  
West Virginia Orthopaedic Society (WVOS).  
Stanley Tao, MD, President  
Diane Slaughter CAE, APR, Executive Director

WVOS reserves the right to determine suitability of advertisements and content. Correspondence regarding subscriptions and changes of address should be sent to:  
WVOS • PO Box 13604 • Charleston, WV 25360  
(304) 984-0308 • [wvos@frontier.com](mailto:wvos@frontier.com)

No Bones About It  
is a member service of the WVOS and may not be reproduced  
without permission. **WVOS © 2018.**