

# Editor's Notes

## A Visit to Oklahoma City

By *Stephen Jackson, M.D., Editor*

**I**n October 2004, at the kind invitation of Jane Fitch, M.D., chair of the Department of Anesthesiology at the University of Oklahoma, I spent several enjoyable days as a visiting professor in her outstanding department. I made avail of the only couple of “spare” hours that I had by visiting the nearby



Oklahoma City National Memorial. This tastefully solemn, visually emotive and reflective Memorial sits on the site of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building that was destroyed on April 19, 1995, by the largest act of terrorism within the U.S. borders until the events of September 11, 2001. One hundred sixty-eight people, including 19 children and one rescue worker, were killed. Adjacent to the Memorial, the Journal Record Building now houses the Oklahoma City National Memorial Museum, which chronicles the somber events of the bombing. My emotional response to visiting the Memorial and Museum prompted my interest in the execution of Timothy McVeigh, the anti-government terrorist-planner and chief perpetrator of the mass murders (to which he referred as “collateral damage” to the building’s demolition). In June 2001, McVeigh was sentenced to death and executed by lethal injection at a U.S. penitentiary in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Serendipitously, just prior to my visit, I had been in communication with one of my favorite residency mentors, retired professor and famed social activist, Dr. Lawrence Egbert, who informed me of a seminal connection between a former chair of Dr. Fitch’s department and execution by lethal injection. I shared this piece of alleged history with Dr. Fitch, and we then tried, in vain, to locate any relevant papers or documents of Dr. Stanley Deutsch, who I later verified (with the assistance of Patrick Sim and Karen Bieterman of the Wood Library Museum) had been intimately involved with the development of a protocol for lethal injection during his tenure as chair. My intensity of interest in this subject waned over the intervening year, even after having telecommunicated with the long since retired Dr. Deutsch. But, this February’s turmoil over the sensationalized scheduled execution of Michael Morales reignited the fire in my belly over the involvement of our specialty with lethal injection. And, my review of the literature produced at least part of “the rest of the story” of the history of physician participation in execution by lethal injection (pages 23-32). In addition, Dr. Larry Sullivan, our ASA Director of California extraordinaire, reports and opines on the resolution on lethal injection that he recently introduced to the ASA Board of Directors (pages 36-37).

## Editor's Notes (cont'd)

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Moving from ethics to economics, this *Bulletin* contains the first installation of a comprehensive two-part series on the history of Medicare's Resource Based Relative Value System and its permeating influence on the economic future of our specialty. Two other articles alert us to the explosive growth of ambulatory surgery settings and introduce strategic considerations relating to this shift of surgical and pain management populations from hospitals to outpatient locales.

And, don't forget that "the time, it is a wasting" for the fulfillment of California licensure's requirement for 12 CME hours on pain management and end-of-life issues by the end of 2006. Module 9 appears in this issue, and we plan to have all 12 modules available to you by the end of this year. If you have not yet availed yourselves of the previous eight modules, don't fret as you can access them through CSA's Web Site (<http://www.csa.org>). These educational gems constitute a unique service and value to CSA members as they are *free*.

The remainder of this issue contains a potpourri of informative and educational articles, the varied topics including oral diabetic medications, "Wall Street Medicine," the Guedel Chart, diversity in healthcare, anesthetizing Koko the gorilla, legislative and practice affairs, and our perennial explanatory plea for all members to support CSA's political action program by contributing to GASPAC.

### **CSA *Bulletin* Cover for Volume 55, No. 1**

#### **Darwin Falls, Death Valley**

©1999 This photograph was taken by CSA member, Gordon Haddow, M.D., and is reprinted on the *Bulletin* cover with his permission. Darwin Falls is just a short hike from Highway 190 in the middle of the driest place in North America. It runs year round, being fed by a spring. The canyon is filled with rich color—so different from the rest of Death Valley. There are fern grottos, hanging gardens and all sorts of wildlife in this unique oasis. This photograph was taken with a 4 x 5 view camera (about a one-second exposure) and scanned into Photoshop for contrast adjustment. It usually is printed using hextone gray inks.