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NEWS FROM THE SOCIETY—

Despite the "growing pains" of youth, the track record of the American Society of Law & Medicine, Inc. is one of remarkable growth and continuing achievement.

Our membership rolls mount steadily and are currently near the 1,000 mark, having more than doubled in the ten months since the predecessor Massachusetts Society of Law & Medicine was merged into the the corporate structure of the American Society of Law & Medicine in May of 1973. We now have representation from almost every state, as well as from Puerto Rico and Canada and from all persons professionally concerned with medicolegal issues and problems.

News of ASLM activities and programs currently appear in leading medical, insurance and legal journals. We have established exchanges of publications and items of import for our respective memberships and readers with these journals. Meaningful liaison has been established with many prominent professional organizations with related interests, and opportunities for expanding joint society sponsorship of educational programs are under active exploration. Recognition of our unique catalytic role in the field of medicolegal education has been forthcoming from leading medical and law schools. We have consequently joined a number of these institutions in attempts to improve existing teaching methods, particularly the use of videotaping.

Since the last report (**Medico-legal News**, January, 1974) many successful programs have been completed:

In January, a pilot program of "grass root" education in the fundamentals of "medical malpractice" was given by several American Society of Law & Medicine speakers to an audience of over two hundred physicians, nurses, house officers and medical students at Boston's Beth Israel Hospital. The program - a 1½ hour panel discussion of the medical malpractice problem and

approaches to prophylaxis by Attorneys Douglas Danner and James Vaccarino and myself - was acclaimed as a practical means of instruction in an area of professional life previously ignored by teaching institutions. The presentation was videotaped and will be used by the hospital for future ongoing house officer orientation and education.

In further expansion of educational programs aimed at disseminating knowledge of the basic legal facts of professional life to health-care providers, the ASLM in cooperation with Boston University's Center for Law and Health Sciences presented on March 30, 1974, an instructive malpractice trial demonstration to a capacity audience of over 300 at Boston University Law School's Auditorium. The case in issue was that of an alleged unsuccessful vasectomy with resulting legal actions of negligence, lack of informed consent and breach of contract for damages claimed by the patient-father, his spouse and the siblings of the "unplanned for" and "unwanted" child. Attorney George J. Annas, Director of the Center, chaired the program. The direct and cross-examination of the defendant doctor and of expert medical witnesses were handled by leading legal practitioners drawn from the best of the nation's trial attorneys. A most provocative and instructive running commentary was provided by Professor Thomas F. Lambert, Jr. of Suffolk University Law School and Editor in Chief, Association of Trial Lawyers of America. The proceedings were videotaped by the Office of Teaching Resources of the Harvard Medical School for future teaching purposes in the ongoing training of medical students, house officers and paramedical personnel.

The response to both of these programs indicates without question that the Society should further explore methods of promoting education to health-care professional as one practical

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News From The Society

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means of tackling the mounting malpractice crisis which currently threatens health-care providers, promotes "defensive medicine" practices and is significantly adding to the cost of medical and hospital care.

And, in yet another area of education, the American Society of Law & Medicine has embarked on an innovative experimental affiliation with Boston University's School of Public Communication. Through the efforts of our Director of Public Information, James Holzer, the Society has been accepted as a "client" by a Boston University graduate student public relations agency and an intern in public relations has been assigned to ASLM National Headquarters for a three month on-the-job training period. One of the projects to be undertaken by the students includes a survey of American Society of Law & Medicine membership to determine why they joined, what they desire and what they look for from the Society. We would greatly appreciate the cooperation of members and prospective members receiving the questionnaires since the data compiled will be most helpful in the planning of membership programs and future educational endeavors.

Considering our limited budget the accomplishments of the ASLM to date are most encouraging. The prime source for ASLM activities, processing of membership applications, keeping of membership records, mailing of notices and announcements and continuing publication of **Medicolegal News** derives from our membership dues (currently \$15.00 on a calendar year basis). Because of our limited financial resources, all members are urged to remit promptly their 1974 dues which include a free subscription to **Medicolegal News**.

The Society additionally requires outside support from corporations, private foundation and governmental agencies to enable expansion of programs and the undertaking of additional projects such as publication of the "**American Journal of Law & Medicine**."

We remind all that the American Society of Law & Medicine, Inc., has been ruled a tax-exempt, publically-supported organization

under sections 501(c)(3) and 509(2) (a) of the Internal Revenue Code so that grantors and donors may deduct all contributions and support for Federal Income, estate and gift tax purposes. ASLM members are urged to submit suggestions for sources of outside aid to Doctor Donald B. Barkan, Chairman of Corporate Funding and Grants, or to Attorney John A. Norris, Chairman of Foundation Funding and Grants, at Society Headquarters.

Meanwhile, the American Society of Law & Medicine, Inc. is pleased to announce thanks to E.R. Squibb & Sons, Inc. and to Pfizer Pharmaceuticals for grants already received this year in support of our 1974 programs.

The calendar of forthcoming events now in active preparation includes:

"**The Third Annual Symposium on Medicolegal Evaluation of Disability - Pulmonary Disorders**" scheduled for November 13, 1974. Program Chairman: Howard A. Frank, M.D. with the assistance of Edward A. Gaensler, M.D. and Thomas L. Delbanco, M.D.

"**The Fourth Annual Symposium on Medicolegal Evaluation of Disability - Psychiatric and Neurologic Disorders**" to be held November 19, 1975. Program Chairman: Robert R. Mezer, M.D.

"**The Legal Implications of Emergency Medical Care**" scheduled in Washington, D.C., May 21-23, 1975. Program Chairman: Neil L. Chayet, J.D.

"**Pensions for the Disabled.**" Program Chairwoman: Beatrice Phillips, A.C.S.W., M.S.W.

"**Computers, Medicine and the Law.**" Program Chairman: Roy N. Freed, LLB.

"**Genetics and the Law.**" Program Chairman: Aubrey Milunsky, M.B.Ch., M.R.C.P., D.C.H.

Suggestions for additional programs, indications of desire to deliver papers or to participate in discussions panels and workshops and ideas for future projects are invited.

Elliot L. Sagall, M.D.
President

ASLM to Publish New Journal

Plans are progressing according to schedule for the publication of THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF LAW & MEDICINE by the Society this Fall.

As was announced previously, the Society's Executive Committee has named John A. Norris, J.D., M.B.A. as the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF LAW & MEDICINE's first Editor-in-Chief.

Attorney Norris, a member of the Boston law firm of Peabody, Brown, Rowley, & Storey, brings to THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF LAW & MEDICINE a long background of scholarly achievement and editorial experience. Mr. Norris graduated with honors from a combined J.D./M.B.A. program at Cornell University where he was a Federal Comprehensive Health Planning Fellow and Editor-in-Chief of the Law School's inter-national law review.

The AMERICAN JOURNAL OF LAW & MEDICINE will feature scholarly articles on topics related to the interdisciplinary study of law and medicine.

It is expected that in its first few issues, the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF LAW & MEDICINE will publish in-depth articles on the medicolegal aspects of such topics as:

1. Automated (computerized) health care delivery systems;
2. Changing medical ethics;
3. Organ transplants;
4. Artificial organs;
5. Population control: Genetics, sterilization, abortion, and euthanasia;
6. Patients' rights;
7. National health insurance;
8. The medical and dental malpractice crisis;
9. Pollution control;
10. No fault insurance for physicians and dentists;
11. The changing relationship between doctors and lawyers;
12. Medical and dental HMO's PSRO's; and
13. The right to health care.

Because of financial considerations, a firm publication date has not yet been set, but the target date is Fall of this year.

Meanwhile, members of the Society who wish to be considered for editorial positions on THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF LAW & MEDICINE are urged to communicate their interest along with a copy of their curriculum vitae to

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Attention Editorial Offices.

Medicolegal manuscripts and suggestions for topics and subject material are also invited.