

In Appreciation of a Very Special Colleague

For more than 40 years, Dr. John P. Geyman has consistently made important contributions to his profession and especially to the specialty of family practice. He has recently chosen to withdraw as editor of *The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice*. He has chosen to focus his boundless energy on other pursuits. Dr. Marjorie Bowman has agreed to become the editor of the *Journal*.

In my view, John Geyman represents a professional who was able to fulfill an absolutely key role in the development of the specialty. He recognized the need for the dissemination of knowledge about the new specialty in the early 1970s. He was the founding editor of *The Journal of Family Practice*, which was the first, and for several years the only, family practice journal to publish original clinical research. At the time, budding family practice faculty were struggling to achieve recognition in academic institutions. Publication of original research was, and remains, very important to be effective as medical school faculty. Dr. Geyman established and maintained the standards for critical review and publication in the specialty.

For nearly 30 years, he devoted a significant portion of his professional efforts to the editing of *The Journal of Family Practice* and subsequently *The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice*. In part because of his influence, *Family Medicine*, sponsored by the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine, and now the *Annals of Family Medicine* have assumed responsibility for publication of original research.

In addition to his accomplishments as an editor, he was a rural practitioner for 13 years and spent 30 years in academic family medicine, 14 of which

were as department chairman at the University of Washington. He has authored and coauthored many articles, book chapters, and books. With all these experiences, John has achieved the respect and admiration of all who know of him and his work.

As a person, John is a soft-spoken, reflective man with a quick wit and a voracious appetite for new knowledge. His speech and writing possess focus and clarity. He is basically a gentle soul whose exterior masks firm and consistent convictions regarding quality. A sometimes difficult task for an editor is to inform an author that a manuscript does not meet the standards of the publication. The letter of rejection must not only be clear and concise in order to benefit the author but also be supportive of the efforts of the author whenever possible. It is unfortunate that his letters cannot be emulated by some other editors who seem to lack John's skills in this area.

At his core, John is a quintessential family physician who constantly seeks to improve his knowledge and understanding; at the same time, he is a loving and caring man with a sincere commitment to helping other people. He has made enormous contributions to family medicine, and I strongly suspect he will continue to do so.

To me, he is a friend, mentor, and colleague. The ABFP is proud to have been associated with Dr. Geyman. We will indeed miss him, although I suspect he will continue to make many more professional contributions. We wish him the best of everything.

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ABFP Executive Director Emeritus