

Norman Goldstein MD

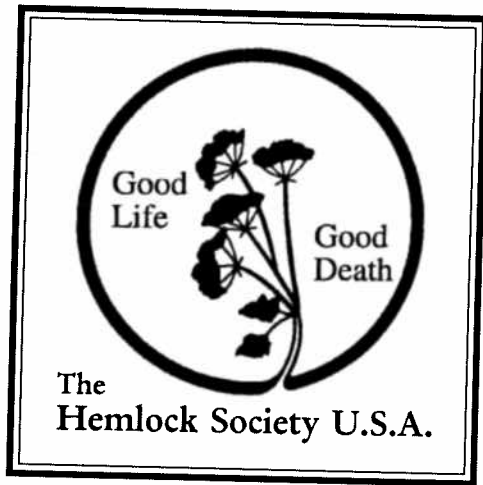
Dedication to Fred C. Holschuh, MD

This issue of the Journal is dedicated to a very special colleague, Hawaii Medical Association's past President and Big Island Emergency Room physician, Dr Fred Holschuh.

Fred has had a varied professional career. After obtaining a medical degree at Columbia, he served his internship at Queen's Medical Center and then a pediatric residency at Children's Hospital. So far, not so unusual. But then Fred went with Dr Michael DeBakey's team to the People's Republic of China in 1973 and served as a medical missionary in Guatemala. In 1986, he participated in the first Sino-American Emergency Medical and Critical Care Conference in China. In 1971, he co-founded the Hawaii Emergency Physicians Association, and has been in Emergency Medical practice for a quarter of a century!

Fred and his wife live in Honokaa, where he has been very active in organized medicine. Through his various positions with the Hawaii Medical Association, Fred has served the entire State and continues to do so. When asked to contribute a manuscript for this Special Issue, Fred said, "Sure, but what I really want to do is share some of my many ER experiences relating to Death with Dignity." And he does it so well in our lead article.

Mahalo nui loa, Fred.



Good Life—Good Death

In most cultures, there exists a ceremonial raising of the cup to celebrate life. The Hebrew toast is "La Chaim," but a better one might be "La Chaim Tov"—To the Good Life. Perhaps the best salute would include the sentiment found on the logo of the Hemlock Society, "Good Life—Good Death." This special issue is devoted to that end; a good death for our patients. There are several excellent books to round out your reading on this subject, including: *Final Exit*; *the Right to Die*; *Let me Die Before I Wake*; *Final Choices: When It's Right to Die*; and *Death with Dignity*. These and other related volumes are now available at the Hawaii Medical Library's section on Death with Dignity, and from Hemlock Society

USA (see the ad and membership information in this issue).

My personal interest in death with dignity began two and a half years ago, and I am frequently asked why a dermatologist is concerned with this subject, since "skin patients never die!" Well, we all die eventually, though usually not of skin related illness, so it is sensible to consider how we would want our final days to elapse if given the choice. While still an intern in New York City, I started carrying a copy of my "Last Wishes" in my wallet. At that time, I wanted to be kept alive—no matter what! I did not want anyone to "pull the plug" under any circumstance. I wanted to stay around as long as possible, regardless of my state of awareness and despite any medical maladies. This outlook has changed with the wisdom of age and the passing of my parents.

Today we are blessed as a society with the ability to prolong healthy, productive lives and provide compassionate pain-free care to those with terminal illnesses. During this season of reflection, you might raise your glass in a tribute to a time of enlightened medical care.

Here's to "Good Life, Good Death."

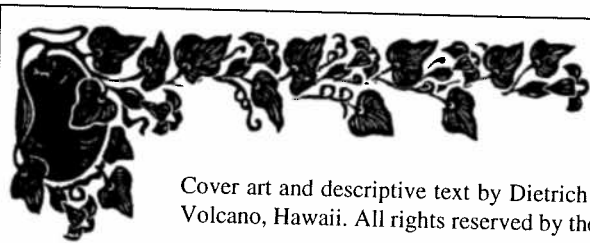
HMA President's Message

John S. Spangler MD

This great issue of death with dignity involves all of us as we all will need rational help at the time of our death. Physicians need to contemplate and analyze their own feelings about this topic.

We all need family support at the time of death with dying being a normal function of a living animal. Our pets receive comprehensive care in this manner. Someday we'll hope that we will have a death with dignity for all.

I congratulate the editor for dedicated work on this issue. Please read and discuss these articles with your family and loved ones.



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"Damien"

Father Damien, a Belgian priest, lived with the Leprosy patients at their isolated colony at Kalaupapa on the island of Molokai. His mission was to mend their sores as well as their souls. Inevitably he died of Leprosy and has since been beatified. He is now a candidate for canonization.