

Really Looking Forward to 2021

Frederick Bonato, Ph.D., FAsMA



Since my last editorial much has happened that affects the world, including our community and the journal. Air travel—something we are particularly interested in—has changed dramatically and who knows when it will once again approach something that appears ‘normal’. Many members of our community were affected in direct ways by the ongoing pandemic. Many of you were on the front lines serving in important roles to help protect human lives. Some of you became infected yourselves. In my role, I have heard bits and pieces from many of you about what has been going on with your lives during this year. Thanks to all of you for your dedication and service. When I have invited individuals to review for the journal, this has been a year of more declines than usual, some indicating to me directly: sorry, but I cannot at this time...too busy because of COVID.

On the positive side, we have seen exciting developments in terms of commercial spaceflight in 2020. A successful NASA and SpaceX test flight on May 30, 2020, led to the first full-fledged taxi flight for NASA by a private company on November 15, 2020. The launch of the Falcon rocket inserted four astronauts into orbit aboard a Dragon capsule that later successfully docked with the International Space Station. These are exciting achievements opening the door to a new era in space travel. We anticipate—and welcome—the opportunity to receive future manuscript submissions related to these latest developments.

We have recently instituted some changes in the Journal regarding the category ‘You’re the Flight Surgeon’ (YTFS). The YTFS feature has been popular with AMHP readers for many years. These articles depict a clinical ‘case’ followed by a series of multiple-choice questions. The correct answer for each question is noted with a detailed explanation as to why it is correct. The YTFS articles have been important educational tools for many readers, but now seems to be the right time for some changes. The AMHP Editorial Board has approved the following: 1) the YTFS category will be renamed: Aerospace Medicine

Clinic (AMC); 2) the AMC category will be peer-reviewed (YTFS was not); and 3) submissions will be encouraged from all qualified authors. Historically, YTFS articles have been authored mainly by residents in the United States Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine residency program.

I wish to thank Dr. Richard Allnutt, who has recently stepped down as the Associate Editor for Resident Case Reports. Dr. Allnutt handled the YTFS manuscripts with great efficiency and we are grateful for his service. Also, a special thanks to Elaine Kawano, who retired last year and really kept things moving smoothly with the YTFS feature. I am also pleased to announce that going forward, Dr. Rebecca Blue will serve as the Associate Editor for the new AMC category. Dr. Blue has been a frequent author and reviewer for the Blue Journal and for a few years now has served on the Journal’s Editorial Board. She is eminently qualified for this new role. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Blue as our newest Associate Editor, joining Dr. Michael Barratt, Associate Editor for Space Medicine, and Dr. Jan Stepanek, Associate Editor for Clinical Aerospace Medicine.

Now that several promising vaccines seem to be on track for distribution soon (at least today as I am writing this), we can look forward more optimistically to the coming year. As always, we are grateful for all the dedicated efforts of our volunteer referees who contribute to the success of the Journal throughout the year! I encourage you to consider submitting your work to AMHP or serving as a reviewer for the Blue Journal. Please stay safe and be well and do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or comments you may have at: AMHPjournal@asma.org.

Very best wishes for 2021!

Reprint & Copyright © by the Aerospace Medical Association, Alexandria, VA.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3357/AMHP.921Editorial.2021>