

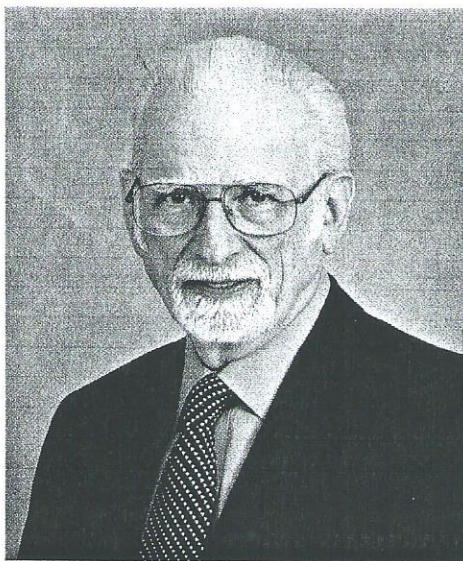
# 12 YEARS ON THE COURSE: A RETROSPECTIVE

Time flies when you are having fun...and, indeed, I have had much fun during my 12 years as the *AMAA Journal* Editor-in-Chief. But, as they say, "All good things must come to an end" and it has come time for me to move on from this position. I would like to thank AMAA Executive Director Dave Watt for his support over the years and, of course, Barbara Baldwin, whose supporting role behind the scenes as managing editor made my position even more enjoyable.

For this last "Message from the Editor," I'd like to share with you a retrospective on some of the topics I have addressed over these past 12 years. In my third message (Fall/Winter 2003), I dealt with the "Health at Any Size" movement and concluded that, as health promoting professionals, our focus should be to help the overweight/obese population take part in health-promoting behaviors (independent of a focus on weight loss, should they have significant trouble losing weight). It was a subject matter I had also addressed in 1997 when I co-authored the book *Just the Weigh You Are: How to Be Fit and Healthy, Whatever Your Size*.

Following this theme of weight loss/management, in the Spring 2007 issue, I discussed the possible contribution of a "Third Factor" in overweight/obesity. This takes into account that, in addition to calories in/calories out, individual variations in metabolism over time can be a third factor in determining success of a weight loss regime.

In the Fall 2008 issue, I addressed an advertising campaign from Pearl Izumi that boosted "running" at the expense of "jogging." I stressed the point that to stay in the game as a regular exerciser, it's what works for each of us and each of our patients that



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is the best approach. As our good friend George Sheehan once wisely observed, "The difference between running and jogging is a race entry blank."

In the Spring/Summer 2011, issue I discussed briefly the American College of Sports Medicine's "Exercise is Medicine" program, originated by Dr. Bob Sallis. I had the privilege, with my good friend Dr. Edward Phillips, to co-author the textbook *ACSM's Exercise is Medicine™: A Clinician's Guide to the Exercise*. In that message I focused on the implications for the program and its successful implementation to be found in the realm of medical education. Over the years we have seen AMAA members take this message and embody it with the promotion of "running as medicine," as

they not only "talked the talk" but also set examples as role models in their communities.

In the Winter/Spring 2014 issue, I again addressed the topic of overweight and obesity with a discussion on the American Medical Association's decision to label obesity as disease. I discussed the pros and cons of that definition for patients; however, my primary focus was on the "800 lb. gorilla" in the obesity room—the U.S. food industry. In 2002, the then-chair of Nutrition at New York University, Dr. Marion Nestle, published a book entitled *Food Politics*. In it she pointed out that by the end of the last century, when the average person needs 2,200 to 2,500 calories to maintain a healthy weight, the food industry was producing about 3,800 calories of food per person per day. The U.S. obesity/diabetes epidemic cannot be dealt with effectively without taking this *very big* gorilla into account.

And so I come to the end of this particular race. Being slow at the beginning of my own multi-sport racing career (Mighty Hamptons Triathlon, Sag Harbor, NY, September 17, 1983) and getting slower ever since, I have always raced for fun. But that does not mean I did (and do) not take the activity seriously. I reached for my objective for all of the 240-plus races I have done: to finish happily and healthily. As I now come to the end of this event, my *AMAAJ* triathlon of writing the "Message from the Editor," "Talking About Training," and reviewing the submissions of others, I look back over the race. And believe you me, I am finishing happily and healthily.

Go well,  
Dr. Steve Jonas