

Treasuring Tradition, Embracing Change: The AOM Alliance's 11th Annual Conference & Expo

By Tierney Tully, MSOM, Dipl.Ac. (NCCAOM)

There are three ingredients for a good conference - **location** (as in the saying, "location, location, location!"), **great seminars and presenters**, and the **networking and feeling of community** that happens when people come together.

We have them all this year at the 11th Annual AOM Alliance Conference & Expo, to be held Apr. 30 - May 4, 2004.

Location

The AOM Alliance has always selected destinations that inspire. From Japantown in San Francisco to Safety Harbor in Tampa Bay, Fla., we look for venues that provide convenience and economy without sacrificing comfort and class. While Japantown focused on local Asian culture in the heart of the cosmopolitan city of San Francisco, the Safety Harbor Resort and Spa was just that - a quiet harbor in which to wind down and relax. These great destination venues have given us their best as our conference has grown each year. We regret that we have to move on to bigger places, but "Embracing Change" is what our conference is all about this year. And so, we hope you will join us in our new home in Hollywood, Calif.

The Renaissance Hollywood Hotel, in the downtown Hollywood and Highland complex, is poised in the heart of the world's entertainment mecca and captures all the glitz, glitter and glamour of the legendary movie-making capital. With magnificent views of Los Angeles and the Hollywood Hills, this ultra-sophisticated destination hotel epitomizes elegance in every room with its mid-century modern design.

The hotel itself is the nucleus of the Hollywood & Highland retail and entertainment setting, and is surrounded by chic, stylish shops, trendy world-class restaurants and state-of-the-art entertainment venues.

We encourage you to bring the family and enjoy live entertainment, film festivals, Universal Studios, Grumman's Chinese Theatre, the Kodak Theatre, the Hollywood Walk of Fame, the Hollywood Bowl, Paramount Studios, and much more!

Great Seminars and Presenters

The Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Alliance Conference & Expo will host an exciting mix of outstanding seminars and workshops. The conference is known for giving participants the most affordable choices of continuing education in the country. This year, we are "Treasuring Tradition" with up to 40 continuing education units of advanced training with some of the finest teachers in the world, including a two-day postconference workshop with Dr. Tran Viet Dzung: "The Energetics and Treatment of Obesity."

All of our presenters bring years of experience, a wealth of insight and wisdom, and a deep caring for the medicine so that you may expand your knowledge, enhance your skills and enjoyment, and deepen your practice.

Friday: The weekend begins a day early with a provocative presentation by David Matteson titled "Complementary & Alternative Medicine Providers: Victims or Visionaries?" This stimulating session sets the stage for the weekend and speaks to our themes of tradition and change. The talk will explore the state of healthcare delivery in the United States and the role complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) practitioners, including AOM professionals, are playing in the unfolding changes. While acupuncture professionals debate educational standards and scope of practice, the prevailing health care delivery system in this country is a train wreck in the making. At the same time, a wellness revolution is underway in which consumers are embracing complementary and alternative therapies in spite of lack of insurance coverage or approval by the Western medicine power structure. Acupuncture and Oriental medicine providers have been riding that wellness wave, but where is it taking you?

David Matteson is uniquely qualified to deliver this presentation. He has many years of experience with CAM providers and institutions, and with public policy development. He has also written extensively on these topics, and his ability to articulate the issues for those not directly involved in the rarified atmosphere of public policy work is a true gift.

A full continental breakfast break for all attendees, sponsored by the AOM Alliance and its sponsors and benefactors, will follow David's presentation. Here, you may meet your colleagues from various

backgrounds and prepare for the remainder of an exciting day of breakout sessions and discussion groups.

Friday's seminars will include: "Building Integrated Practitioner Teams" with Lorren Sandt, Misha Cohen and Lyn Patrick; "Green Tea in TCM" with Brent Harvey; "Clinical Nutrition" with Carolyn Reuben; "Facial Diagnosis" with Dirk Hein; "Medical *Qigong*" with Richard Jahnke; "Stress, Anxiety & Depression" with Andrew Gaeddert; "Korean Hand Therapy" with Dan Lobash; "Advanced Auricular Acupuncture" with Terry Oleson; "Emerging Models in Oriental Medicine" with Matthew Bauer; "Trigrams, Meridians and *Chi Kung* Acupuncture" with Jeff Nagel; "Pediatric *Shoneishin*" with Jake Fratkin; "Integration or Collaboration" with Corinne Axelrod; and "Celebrating Fire" with David Ford. (Please see the Alliance's Web site for full seminar descriptions and speaker biographies).

Also on Friday, "Conservation and Cultivation: Chinese Medicinal Plants in an Urban Garden," sponsored by the Alliance Herbal Committee, will take participants on a field trip to The Learning Garden, a collaboration between Venice High School, Yo San University of Traditional Chinese Medicine and the local community, where over 40 Chinese herbs are being grown. Jean Giblette, director of High Falls Garden in New York, and David Crow, local practitioner and supporter of The Learning Garden, will talk about the cooperative efforts between herb growers and Chinese medicine practitioners to bring high-quality organic herbs to the professional herbalist.

Friday would not be Friday at the conference without the annual "Visions of the Future" session, which will again be devoted to a town hall meeting, in an ongoing effort to gather commentary from the professional community about the challenges and issues it faces for the future.

Saturday: The AOM Alliance Membership Meeting will begin, during which the board of directors will present a report to members about the organization's ongoing efforts and activities. This is a special time set aside for members to meet each other and to bring their concerns to the attention of the board. There will also be reports from other national organizations to bring you up to speed on the national scene.

Saturday's presentations include: "Chinese Herbal Medicine and Cancer" with Jake Fratkin; "Classical Five-Element Acupuncture" with Neil Gumenick and Floyd Herdrich; "Nine Phases *Qigong*" with Roger Jahnke; "The Healing Relationship" with Michael Gaeta; "Balance Method Pulse Diagnosis" with Richard Tan; "Acutonics" with Donna Carey and Sue Wadden; "Treating Fibromyalgia Pain" with Bruce Hocking; "Using Essential Oils in Oriental Medicine" with Peter Holmes; and "Success Without Insurance" with Michael Gaeta.

Saturday night is the AOM Alliance Awards Banquet, where we honor our colleagues who have shown extraordinary service to the profession in various areas. The food will be provided by Wolfgang Puck Catering (don't forget to check out Wolfgang's restaurant, Vert, in the complex) and is sure to titillate your taste buds. The focus for this year's banquet will be entertainment, with a capital "E." After all, we will be in the entertainment capital of the world.

Sunday: Sunday's presentations include: "*Gua Sha* Therapy" with Hai He Tian; "Integrating Contemporary & Classical Acupuncture" with Sean Marshall; "*Qi* Transformation" with Z'ev Rosenberg; "*Huatojiaji* Points" with Matt Callison; "Advanced Cupping Techniques" with Hai He Tian; "Entry-Exit Blocks & Aggressive Energy" with David Ford; "Treating Menopause with Acupuncture" with Susie Hayes; "AOM and Reproductive Medicine" with Daoshing Ni; and "Eight Extra Meridians - Eight Trigrams of the Mysterious Turtle" with Jeff Nagle.

"Herbal Regulation: Ephedra, DSHEA and Your Private Practice" with Loren Israelson, and "Medicinal Herb Quality: Descriptive Sensory Analysis," with representatives from the Medicinal Herb Network, are both sponsored by the AOM Alliance Herb Committee. The committee has spent an extraordinary amount of effort to bring in these experts in the medicinal herb industry to discuss important issues of the regulation, safety, and quality of our *materia medica*. These sessions will be back-to-back on Sunday morning from 8:30-12:30. Please see our Web site for full descriptions of the seminars and the presenters' credentials. Last but not least, "Commitment to Public Health: Community Clinics Panel," led by Carla Wilson, will examine contemporary models of community-based clinic care that focus on acupuncture and Oriental medicine.

Monday and Tuesday: World-renowned physician and lecturer Dr. Tran Viet Dzung will present a two-day workshop, "The Energetics and Treatment of Obesity," on Monday and Tuesday, May 3-4. This workshop will focus on the energetic pathology of obesity, going far beyond what is generally understood in modern Chinese medicine, and will discuss specific treatments addressing underlying etiologies. It is important to note that this workshop is not about a "weight loss program," but is a serious look at a critical health problem demanding in depth clinical understanding by practitioners of Oriental medicine.

Community and Networking

The annual AOM Alliance conference is not just a continuing education event; so much happens before, after, and between the seminars. For instance, one reason the Alliance had to find a new location is to accommodate the burgeoning numbers of suppliers to our profession. We turned away too many exhibitors

last year due to lack of space, and we have vowed not to do that again. Our exhibit hall this year will be home to over 50 suppliers of products and services for AOM professionals. These vendors support the Alliance by being present and by participating in sponsorships of events throughout the course of the conference.

A national conference brings practitioners, educators, regulators and concerned others with diverse interests together. Issues are reviewed, problems are solved, new alliances are made, ideas are born, and anything can happen. Each person goes home at the end with something different. It's an exciting place to be where everyone learns something new. For you, "embracing change" may be getting off the "CEU track" to attend a meeting, public hearing or discussion group, or even simply some of the conversations going on in the corridors. Sometimes, what you learn out of class can be just as important as what you learn in class.

Lunches: Saturday - NADA Lunch. Those interested in learning about the National Acupuncture Detoxification Association, the NADA protocol and how to become certified in acupuncture detox should meet at the registration desk at 12:45. Sunday - Join Carla Wilson for lunch to discuss gay and lesbian issues/meet colleagues. Meet at the registration desk at 12:45.

Student Caucus Meeting: Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Future leaders of the profession are invited to join their fellow students from around the country for a history of the profession, an overview of state and national legislation, an orientation to the national organizations, and networking. Each student representative to the caucus must be designated by his or her school. Ask your dean of students or school administrator to contact the Alliance office for sign-up forms.

Council of State Association Presidents Meeting: Sunday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. This is the best thing that could happen to your association leadership. Current leaders of state associations are invited to join their colleagues from around the country to discuss issues facing state associations. From membership recruitment to legislative challenges, this is always an extremely enlightening and useful session for those who want to learn strategies for leading and managing a state membership association. Due to limited space, and in the interest of balanced representation, each state association is asked to send one representative, usually the president, but another officer can be designated as representative. Please contact the Alliance office for more information.

Orientation to National Organizations: Saturday, 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. This meeting is for those individuals who have just become members of state or national boards in the past year and are still struggling with the "alphabet soup" of the profession. Representatives from ACAOM, CCAOM, NCCAOM and FAOMRA will be on hand to give a brief overview of their organization's role and current activities.

Meetings of ACAOM, CCAOM and FAOMRA: Over the course of the week prior to the conference, and during the conference itself, these national organizations will be holding their own meetings. Some are closed meetings; others are public hearings concerning educational standards and school programs. If you are interested in attending any of these meetings, contact the organizations directly (www.acaom.org, www.ccaom.org, www.nccaom.org or www.faomra.org) for their schedules.

Tour of the Kodak Theater: We will be getting group discount tickets for tours of local attractions, including the Kodak Theater, home of the Academy Awards. Information on available trips and tours will be included in your conference packet when you register.

Bowling Match at the Lucky Strike Bowling Lanes: Held on the H&H grounds, this will be an opportunity for some friendly competition among colleagues. We will have sign-up sheets at registration for the "bowl off" on Sunday evening. There will be a prize for the winning team.

Disneyland: The Alliance has obtained twilight tickets at a significant discount to offer to conference attendees and their families. Valid after 4 p.m., these tickets are for admission to Disneyland or Disney's California Adventure. Call the Alliance office before March 31st for more details or to order tickets to "The Happiest Place On Earth" for your family!

Information on the 11th Annual AOM Alliance Conference & Expo, including hotel, airlines, and ground transportation sponsor information, may be found at www.aomalliance.org. Online registration is also provided. Interested parties may also call the conference hotline at (800) 814-5956.

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