



TMAA NEWSLINE

MANY VOICES, ONE HEART

In This Jan. Issue

- President's Message
- Meet Sarah Higgins
- Proposed AMAA By-Law Amendment
- Hearts To...
- Health Promotion
- TMA Grassroots Efforts – A Change to voterVOICE
- Doctors' Day
- AMAA website
- Mark Your Calendar

Contact Us

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President's Message

Where has the time gone? March is about to be here and your Tennessee Medical Alliance is actively working on convention and all the things that come at the end of our year.

Please note the calendar below with dates of importance. Now is the time to send in **Membership dues**. We no longer have the carbon copy sheets from the AMAA to work with, but we are asked to send in spread sheets. If you need some assistance with that, please don't hesitate to call me. I have all the spread sheets from last year and that may make it easier for you.

We are now sending you the Legistat with all the current information about legislative issues. If you are not receiving that, please contact Judy at the TMAA office so she can be sure that you are included in the e-mailing.

Mark your calendar now for the convention.

**Many Voices, One Heart
Celebrating 79 Years
Of Making a Difference in
Tennessee.
April 27 and 28.**

All members are welcome. All county presidents are expected as they function as the Board of Directors of the TMAA.

Sue Vegors

MEET SARAH

TMAA President-Elect, Sarah Higgins, although originally from Pittsburgh, PA, has lived in the Northeast, the Midwest, the West and the South and has made Knoxville, Tennessee her home since 1985. She is married to Thomas G. Higgins, M.D., a neurologist who specializes in Sleep Medicine. The Higgins' have two children, Greg, 22, a senior at American University in Washington, D.C. and Melissa, 19, a freshman at the University of South Carolina, Columbia.

The Alliance is one of Sarah's many interests and she has been a member since 1986. Sarah attended college at The Pennsylvania State University where she obtained a degree in History and attended law school at the University of Maryland. Her 16 year practice of law in Knoxville lead her to her current professional position as a mediator in family law. Sarah also sits as a Special Master for Knox County's Fourth Circuit Court where she adjudges matters of domestic violence. In addition to her Alliance and professional activities, Sarah enjoys cooking, needlework and loves to read. Fortunately, she loves to travel as well and looks forward to seeing many of you in the next year as she travels for the Alliance.

Proposed AMAA By-law Amendment By Sarah Higgins

By now, many of you have read the article in the AMA Alliance Newslines on the proposed new category of AMAA membership, "domestic partners." TMAA President, Sue Vegors' and President-Elect, Sarah Higgins, have heard from and spoken with a number of alliance members across the state, with varied reactions to this article. Many of you have told us that you cannot support and will not remain a member of an organization which includes this category of membership. This having been said, it is important to reiterate the basic facts of this proposed change to the by-laws of the AMAA and to inform you of Tennessee's plan of action.

The heart of the matter is that at the annual AMAA convention in June 2007, the By-laws Committee will submit a new category of membership to the House of Delegates which will then discuss it and vote on it. The proposed category would make domestic partners/significant others eligible for membership in the AMAA. The rights of state and local alliances to formulate their own membership categories cannot and will not be abridged.

The rationale behind the proposal is that some states have conferred the legal rights of spouses to partners in "committed relationships." This has primarily been in the areas of insurance and employee benefits. Additionally, some state and local alliances have expanded their membership categories to include widows, retirees, significant others, other family members, friends of medicine or the alliance, and honorary and associate members. The

AAMA By-laws Committee concluded that there was a sizable portion of state alliance members who are not currently eligible to join the National organization.

It is imperative to note at this point that this proposed by-laws amendment has not yet been made. It will be voted upon in June by written ballot. Tennessee's representation at the AAMA convention is determined by the number of members we have. The more members we have, the more delegates we can send to Chicago to make our voice heard.

TMAA leadership is asking the County alliances to discuss this proposed by-laws amendment with your membership and to inform us as to how you wish us to vote. Members-at-large can contact us directly. We will address this issue with you at the state convention in April. A policy will be formulated and we will be prepared for the National convention with a statement which presents a unified front. It is more important than ever to remain a federated Alliance member and give Tennessee a loud voice.



HEARTS TO.....

- **Washington-Unicoi-Johnson County Medical Alliance** for 1,000 copies of "*Tips for Safe Surfing-cyber Safety. A Guide for Parents and Teens*" that is being distributed to all Johnson City eighth and ninth grade students this year.
- **Bedford County Medical Alliance** for co-hosting an Organ Donor Awareness Coffee that was attended by over 60 citizens of that county.
- **West TN Consolidated Medical Alliance** for its donation of \$1100 to the WRAP (Women's Resource Assistance Program).
- **NAMA Medical Alliance** for being presented with a certificate from Hospital Hospitality House in

recognition of their valuable contributions to them each month.

Thank you for using your voices to make a difference in Tennessee!

We would like to celebrate all that you do, please Send us information on what your Alliance is doing so we can pass it on in the Newslite.

HEALTH PROMOTION

Reminding all county health promotion volunteers that March 15, 2007 is the deadline to submit TMAA Health Grant requests. The requests should be mailed to:

Robin Hutchins
1425 Kensington Drive
Knoxville, TN 37922

Please call Robin if you have questions (865-693-5997 or 865-680-6502). shutch1029@hotmail.com

TMA Grassroots Efforts- A Change to *voterVOICE*

The Tennessee Medical Association has set up an easy-to-use online tool called *voterVOICE* that will help us efficiently and effectively mobilize and manage political grassroots action in the 2007 legislative session. The anytime, anywhere element of this powerful Internet-based tool gives you the flexibility you need to participate in the legislative process on behalf of the medical profession and your practice. The TMA is offering the use of this advocacy tool to the **Alliance** at no cost in order to strengthen both our advocacy efforts as well as our already strong partnership.

voterVOICE will increase grassroots participation and dramatically improve our response time on political emergencies. It will take about 15-20 minutes for the existing TMA governmental affairs team to set-up and roll out an issue. **In turn, you can make contact with your elected officials in as little as 1-2 minutes.** Sending a message using *voterVOICE* is very intuitive – the

following gives you an idea about what the process looks like:

CALL TO ACTION

Step 1: We may have one or multiple issues that require action. The call-to-action could come through the weekly Legistat, a message posted on our Web site or through a special contact to you. Regardless, TMA will send you a link to a single issue posted on a Web Alert page or a link to our Grassroots Action Center where multiple issues are posted. At the Action Center, you will see the issue(s) that we have determined are important and warrant grassroots input. Select the issue that you are interested in, then click “Continue.”

Step 2: Complete the log-in information, providing your email address (the one that TMA has on file for you) and zip code to log in. Click “Continue.”

PREPARING THE MESSAGE

Step 3: After logging in, you will see a list of public officials, automatically pre-selected based on your address and TMA’s determination of who should receive grassroots input. You will be given a variety of options to choose from as to how you would like to contact the legislators; meeting, phone call, letter, or email. If you choose to send a letter or e-mail only to certain legislators listed, you may “de-select” any individual whom you do not want to contact.

NOTE: *While we do not want to discourage use of e-mail, it is our responsibility to inform you that this is the least effective way to communicate with lawmakers.* If you are willing to set up a meeting or place a call, that is usually a more effective and successful way to communicate your message. It will be at this point in the process as to which type of communication you wish to use. Click “Continue.”

Step 4: Now it is time to compose your message(s). TMA will provide talking points that can be “cut and pasted” and used as guidelines for you to write your own personal messages or for a personal call. Be sure to use “Check Spelling” and click “Preview Message” before sending a written message.

SENDING THE MESSAGE

Step 5: Use the “Back” button to make any revisions. When you are satisfied with your message, click “Send Message.” It’s that simple!

TMA will also be using *voterVOICE*’s online newsletter tool to keep you apprised of what’s happening legislatively. That way, we will not have to wait on someone else’s news cycle for you to find out the results of our political action.

voterVOICE is going to help TMA execute the best practices of grassroots advocacy- sending out strategic calls to action to supporters, matching supporters to their elected officials (not the ineffective practice of spamming whole legislative bodies), presenting key talking points to supporters (so that our collective voices stay “on message”) and then allowing TMA to monitor grassroots progress from start to finish.

If this seems complicated, it really isn't. When regular session begins, we will walk you through the process.

We look forward to seeing your participation in the upcoming regular session.

DIRECTORY CHANGES

We are striving to keep our directory as current as possible. Please e-mail changes to TMAA@tma.medwire.org.

COUNTY ALLIANCE EVENTS

If you would like to have your county alliance event publicized, please - mail the information to the TMAA office.



Please remember to mail a copy of your newsletter to the TMAA office.



**NATIONAL
DOCTORS' DAY**

MARCH 30 ©

Doctors' Day will be here before we know it. Why don't you take a moment to review our products on our website? Remember SMA(Southern Medical Association) is the official provider of Doctors' Day items and a portion of the proceeds will go directly to the SMA Research & Education Endowment Fund.

<http://www.sma.org/auxiliary/doctorsday/doctordaysupplies/ordersupplies.cfm>

They have new products available such as Mylar balloons to help you decorate, lapel pins and of course our favorite Doctors' Day greeting cards, stickers, posters and our highly coveted Doctors' Day mugs!

Last year, they ran out of many items so why not go ahead and place your order now to insure your products arrive on time! Just go to the website listed above and place your order!

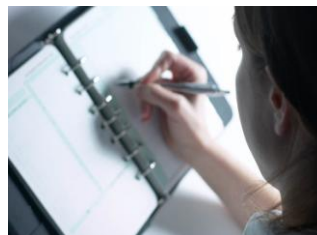
If you have any questions, please feel free to call 800-423-4992

ext. 181



Do you have the new AMAA website bookmarked on your computer. Be sure to visit this easy to use site www.amaalliance.org


MARK YOUR CALENDAR



FEBRUARY 20 NAMA tours Schermerhorn Center with lunch to Follow
(Contact – Sheila Herring)

FEBRUARY 20 KAMA Medical Alliance
& 23 TAPP (Teen Aids Prevention Program)
(Contact – Nancy Prater for other dates)

MARCH 1 Deadline for submitting Health Grant requests

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- MARCH 1 KAMA March Meeting
Women's Health Fair at St. Mary's Women's
Pavilion
(Contact – Shawna Dittrich)
 - MARCH 15 Deadline for Dolores Chandra Award Nomination
 - APRIL 27-28 TMA-TMAA Annual Meeting
Nashville Airport Marriott Hotel

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