

CME cruise conference: Give yourself a break

As you go about your daily routines many of you are, sadly, unaware of your recent missed opportunity. I am writing this editorial while lying in bed looking out at the beautiful grounds of the Intercontinental Resort in Tahiti. Sure, it's raining, but that doesn't detract from the joy I feel at rubbing this in your collective face. Also, rain doesn't really bother me as I have spent most of my life dwelling in the rainforest that is Vancouver.

I have just completed the *BC Medical Journal's* biennial CME cruise with a significant number of your lucky colleagues. We sailed aboard the beautiful *Paul Gauguin* ship out of Papeete, Tahiti, on 1 March. We visited the Society Islands of French Polynesia and the Cook Islands of New Zealand. Included as stops were Huahine, Rarotonga, Aitutaki, Taha'a, Bora Bora, Moorea, and back to Tahiti, where I am now 10 pounds heavier and significantly slower (mentally and physically). It is possible that we were unable to enter one lagoon due to a swell almost capsizing the tender boat, but that is actually a vicious rumor spread by the *New England Journal of Medicine*, as they are jealous of us.

The m/s *Paul Gauguin* is an amazing ship where everything is top-notch. The food is first-class and abundant, accompanied by delicious quality wines. Even if one tries to be good about choices and portion sizes, the food pimps bring trays out to you while you lounge by the pool. Speaking of the waiters, they and the rest of the staff are friendly, polite, and work very hard to make your holiday experience memorable. I am not sure how I am supposed to return to pulling out my own chair, carrying my own plate, and placing my own napkin on my

lap—oh, the horrors. If you managed to roll off your deck chair and venture ashore, available excursions included snorkeling, diving, boat rides, hiking, wave runners, ATVs, bus tours, off-road vehicles, whale riding (just threw that one in to see if you were still paying attention), and more.

(see the two blogs posted at www.bcmj.org for details of the CME).

Much of what we do as physicians involves health promotion and disease prevention. So, it is time to help yourselves by planning for the next *BCMJ* excursion. Remember, you only have 2 years in which to

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Many new friendships were made and much laughter was shared. Life-long memories were forged in the Polynesian sun and I am sure these stories will be handed down from generation to generation in solemn ancestral ceremonies. However, a reminder to all of you conference attendees: what happened in the Taha'a motu lagoon stays in the Taha'a motu lagoon! I should probably briefly mention that CME was provided during days spent at sea by excellent speakers well versed in their respective specialties

save while anxiously scouring our award-winning journal for the next CME cruise announcement. I realize this is a long time to wait, but missing another once-in-a-lifetime (well, every couple of years) opportunity is sure to lead to even greater depths of despair. I suggest you visit our website at least daily and read every *BCMJ* issue cover to cover, particularly DRR's editorials, to make sure you don't miss a thing.

—DRR



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Nostalgia ain't what it used to be

A number of events in recent months have caused me to recall the old saying, “Nostalgia ain't what it used to be.” Perhaps more accurately, they have caused me to feel myself getting old. In this regard, the writing has been on the wall for a few years now—as I mentioned 2 years ago in my editorial on retirement (*BCMJ* 2012;54:118-119). Since then the hair has thinned and grayed even more, the middle has expanded even more, and the vim and vigor have become a little less exuberant. I am, however, not mourning the passage of time. On the contrary; I am very happy with my situation in life and feel truly blessed to be where I am.

I remember my parents when they were my age and I certainly don't feel as old as they seemed to me at the time. Now it is our children who love to joke about their old parents and will probably say the same things about us in years to come. My parents joked recently that their social life seems to consist of visiting friends in hospital or care facilities and going to funerals and tombstone unveilings.

With our younger son coming to the end of his first year in high school, and our older son about to graduate and start his tertiary education at UBC, I am definitely feeling the years pass. Having said that, my wife and I celebrate our boys' increased independence, and we are enjoying each other's company even more because of it.

One of the key events that led me to feel nostalgic (old) was the 25-year reunion of my medical class of 1988, which I attended in Cape Town this past December. When we graduated from the University of Cape Town as doctors, Nelson Mandela was still imprisoned on Robben Island. Our reunion was held 1 day before Mandela's funeral in a very different South Africa from the one that existed in 1988. The reunion was an amazing experience. Most of us haven't changed much in 25 years and were easily recognized by our peers and friends, despite the addition of weight and subtraction of hair. It was fun to catch up with old friends and people we had studied with for 6 years. I was impressed by the great contri-

butions to medicine my classmates have made all over the world—South Africa, North America, Europe, Australia, and a remote outpost on a mountaintop in Papua, Indonesia. The accomplishments of our graduating class include transcatheter aortic valve replacements, radio frequency ablation of renal carcinoma, world-class research, drug development, and the establishing of an international charity to help African children living with HIV.

The other event from this past year that signified the passage of time for me occurred in my professional life. After working in the same community for over 20 years, I had the huge privilege of delivering the baby of a baby I had delivered years ago. The newborn has very proud parents and grandparents, as would be expected. It was a joy for me to deliver my first baby of a baby. Her birth turned a young lady into a mother, and a mother into a grandmother. I wonder if that makes me a grand-doctor and how many other grand-doctors are still practising!

—DBC

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