

## Letter From The President

This past 18 months has gone by so quickly. I can't believe I'm almost a Past-President!!! It has definitely been an interesting, sobering, and thought provoking period of time besides being fun. I really never thought I would say I 'enjoyed' being president, but I have. When you have so many great colleagues who are friends to work with, how could it not be enjoyable? Many times I've thought MASFAP could run itself and I now know this is true. Someone is always there to jump in and help out without being asked and so many put a great amount of time and effort into the organization.

I want to thank Kathy Morriss especially for taking over Professional Development and organizing the Staff Workshops around the state and the Fundamentals Workshop at College of the Ozarks this summer. I've heard they were all a great success. I know the committee she had to work with was great, as always, but having someone take charge who is so dedicated and organized was welcomed by myself and Angie Beam in the turmoil following Bob's death.

As sad as Bob's death was for all of us, I know it was also a great tribute to him and a celebration not only of his life, but also of our MASFAP family, for everyone who attended his memorial service. I know many who feel as I do that this association is truly like an extended family. Our office families are the same way. (I catch myself many times leaving a meeting and telling someone "I need to head home" when I mean the office.) At the June board meeting, it was voted to approve the 'Bob Berger New Professional Award' in lasting memory of a man who devoted so much time and energy to our profession, touched so many with his humor and showed us how to truly live life to the fullest.

For those of you just starting out in MASFAP I want to urge you to get involved and make a difference not only in our organization, but in the lives of so many families you not only help each day in your offices, but through MASFAP. My favorite story on how someone new can make such a difference is about some of my first committee work in MASFAP. Working on the Early Awareness Committee in about 1988 or so was when I first met this 'kid' who amazed me. Jean Dennis was so young (I'm much older, but we won't mention ages here) and I couldn't believe how she literally took over the organization of our project that year. I think my jaw was open the entire meeting. I didn't question that she was 'in charge' that day nor have I since then. So, jump in. I think you'll be amazed too.

Lastly, I know I should have a lot of deep thoughts to pass on since I've had so much time to reflect while lounging in various medical offices these last few months. Most of my thoughts obviously have been about family and friends. I want to tell you all again how dear you are to me and how much your concern has meant. I hope my office staff knows how much I appreciate their support and caring and everything they have done to keep things going when I'm not here. I want you to know that Cindy truly means it when she said she would carry me on her back if necessary to get me to MASFAA and MASFAP this fall. You can't beat a friend like that and I would never have met her if it weren't for MASFAP.