

## **Ronald Mezick, PA-C 1993-1997**

Mr. Mezick worked quietly a long time in the background doing many odd jobs for the Society before becoming our eighth president. He has remained active in the Society not only as a mentor but also continuing to help out in many capacities.

### **PSPA News: From your perspective, what were the greatest challenges that the PSPA and its leadership faced during your term in office as president?**

RM: Since most of my memory cells are long past their expiration date it's hard to remember specifics from those long ago days. Like most organizations there had been only a small group of people doing the work for the Society. Getting non active members of the Society to step up and take a small part in operations was a key focus during my tenure. I believe we were very successful with broadening member activity and inclusiveness into new committees for the Society.

### **PSPA News: What were the greatest achievements for PSPA during your term?**

RM: I believe we won the first AAPA Chapter Excellence Award during that time. It certainly was an honor brought forth by the activities of the previous presidency and most certainly by the activities of the members and the executive secretaries involved in the Society during those years. Expanding committees and seeing new faces take on new roles was also a very inspiring thing to see. I continue to feel some small amount of pride and pleasure as I watch new members become active and slowly spread their wings to take on those leadership roles.

### **PSPA News: What were your greatest disappointments?**

RM: One of the things that distresses me is that continually there are people who view the PSPA Board and it's members as a closed group. The Board members are the representatives of all PAs in the state whether they are members or not. Seeing other groups formed throughout the state who were not working with our organization was very frustrating. Having a large medical center who employed a large number of PAs who were not involved or active in the PSPA was a large disappointment.

### **PSPA News: Tell us something that happened during your term as president that you think our members should know.**

RM: The fear of being responsible for everything rapidly disappears. The support and hard work I got from people like Mike Habeck, Steve Wilson, Dave and Kathy Bissonette, Susan DeSantis, Bill Duryea and many others actually made the job seem to move effortlessly at times. I certainly never felt alone and am embarrassed that I can't name everyone here.

### **PSPA News: Now that time has passed, was being president of the PSPA something that you are glad you tackled?**

RM: I'm very glad I took the time to be president. It gave me a great opportunity to meet people and to learn to coerce them into taking on a responsibility for their careers. It also helped me learn to believe in my own abilities and to not take on face value what legislators and opponents to our ideals say. Things can be changed if you keep fighting long enough.

### **PSPA News: What did you do prior to becoming a PA?**

RM: Prior to being a PA I attended college (trying to figure out what I wanted to be when I grew up.) I belonged to a volunteer fire department and ran their ambulance service for 7 years. I happened to discover the profession (although they were called Health Associates where I graduated) when I was on a call at the ER and one of the docs told me about a program starting in a neighboring college.

### **PSPA News: Where did you get your PA education and when did you graduate?**

RM: I attended The Johns Hopkins School of Health Services and graduated in 1975. At that time our program was on the second floor and the Essex Community College program was on the third floor. We were not allowed to mingle and even had to wear different color lab coats (white being reserved for the medical students).

### **PSPA News: In what specialties have you worked?**

RM: I have always been and always will be in family medicine. Although some days my “specialty” may be gynecology or psychiatry, with a splash of OB, pediatrics, sports medicine, surgery, plastics, internal medicine...the variety sure makes the days go faster.

**PSPA News: What are you doing now?**

RM: I continue to work full time as a PA but have lots of other professional activities such as serving as the schoolhealth provider and continuing to work with related health groups such as the Rural Health Society, and other community health groups. I continue to referee soccer and will as long as the knees hold out. However, the idea of beachcombing or going west on my motorcycle is looking pretty good.

**PSPA News: What are your major interests in life, i.e., passions or hobbies?**

RM: My kids say I have too many interests and toys but they always know they and my wife are number one. Together Deb and I enjoy snowmobiling, RVing with our dogs, motorcycling, camping with friends, enjoying our church family, and helping others. Renovating our 130+ year old house is a continual process and Deb's made me learn a lot over the years (she says she taught me everything).

**PSPA News: Who are your significant others, family members?**

RM: Our home currently includes my wife Deb, our two dogs (Zoey and Darcey the devil dog), my mother-in-law, Faye, and her dog Sadie. The kids come back once in a while but Kevin lives in Knoxville TN, Dan and his wife Cindy live in Philadelphia, and Ben has recently moved from Wisconsin to Long Island NY (at least he's closer now.)