



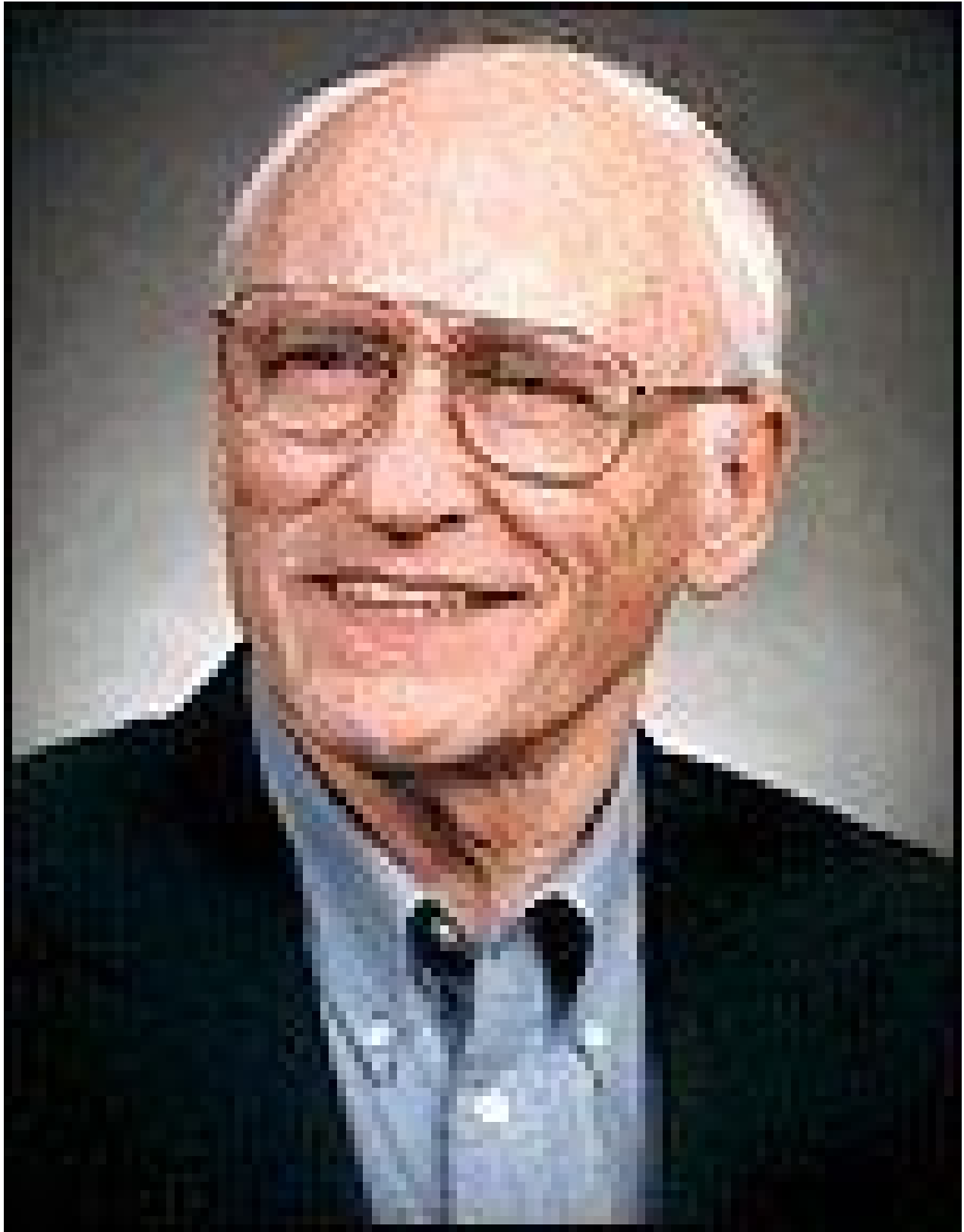
NEWS / PROFESSION

## **The Passing of a Chiropractic Icon**

A MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR DR. JERRY MCANDREWS

Louis Sportelli, DC

Today, June 9, 2006, I received a call from George McAndrews, informing me that my friend and his brother, Jerry McAndrews, DC, had passed away. Jerry and I knew each other for more than 40 years; we were close personally and professionally. It is only when news of the passing of someone close to you occurs that you come to the realization of just how fragile life truly is. With heavy heart and a tear in my eye, I dedicate this article to my friend. He was a true chiropractic champion, visionary, historian, strategist, and family man.



## Jerome F. McAndrews, DC

The opportunity to know Jerry personally was a privilege. At one time or another, his name, and that of his famous chiropractic family, must have been seen or heard by every DC in the world. Dr. McAndrews was truly a most unusual individual, whose varied career of service to the chiropractic profession merits an honored place in our memory.

Jerry began his undergraduate education at the University of Iowa. He subsequently enrolled in the Palmer College of Chiropractic and graduated in 1956. I am certain that at that time, he did not envision himself as the future president of Palmer (1979-1987). During his tenure as president, he was also vice president of the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE) and president of the Association of Chiropractic Colleges.

Many will remember Dr. McAndrews' stewardship during the years (1971-1979) he served as the executive vice president of the International Chiropractors Association (ICA), during the administration of his dear friend, Joseph Mazarelli, DC. Jerry's commitment to the profession transcended philosophy, organizations, titles and geography. He simply served where and when he was asked.

Numerous awards were bestowed upon Jerry during his long service to the profession, including "Chiropractor of the Year" from the ICA (1973) and an honorary Doctor of Chiropractic Humanities in 1980 from the Palmer College of Chiropractic. In addition to his work on behalf of the ICA, Jerry later contributed as vice president for professional affairs of the American Chiropractic Association (1990-1995). His favorite time, he often said, was his term of service with NCMIC as a member of the board of directors; he loved the fellowship, friendship and fraternity of the group with whom he served.

This only begins to list some of his accomplishments and offices throughout his stellar career. He truly had an eclectic career and touched everything he was involved with passionately.

# INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF CHIROPRACTK

VOL. 30  
NO. 1



NOVEMBER 1971

MEDICARE GUIDELINES

PART II CHIROPRACTIC  
EFFECTIVENESS IN THE  
EMOTIONAL, LEARN-  
AND BEHAVIORAL

AND MEANS  
COMMITTEE  
HEARING ROOM

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL CHIROPRACTORS ASSOCIATION

Dr. McAndrews (far right) meets with Brigadier General Joseph Adams (far left) and Dr. Joseph Mazzarelli in Washington, D.C.

I pulled out my Jerry McAndrews file - more than a foot thick - to reminisce about the many exchanges I had with him, written, verbal and of late, electronic. The file dates back to the late 1960s and continues right up to June 2006. How inspiring to read the professional responses and the statesmanlike manner of each communication. He truly was a leader in every sense of the word. I could not help but be struck with the visionary thinking in many of the documents in my file.

It is certainly no secret that Jerry had a devotion to his brother George. The litigation against the American Medical Association was one of the most significant events in Jerry's life. He literally memorized hundreds of passages from the millions of documents and was able to spellbind audiences with his "Tales from the Trial" and the courtroom antics of his famous brother, George. Jerry was proud of his brother and as a result of his personal involvement, the litigation never became a burden, but rather served to bolster his resolve and energize his dedication. I want to share a few of the literally hundreds of exchanges in an attempt to capture some small part of the personality embodied in Jerry McAndrews. His fight, his spirit, his insight, his love are captured in his letters. I would rather have Jerry's own words speak for him than to attempt to reconstruct his thoughts with my words.

An excerpt from a letter to a reporter, Mr. Mark Brown, Dec. 18, 1981, almost 25 years ago, clearly demonstrates how true Jerry's words ring today:

Dear Mr. Brown:

I want to compliment you highly on the professionalism so evident in your journalistic effort, "Chiro: How Much Healing? How Much Flim-Flam?," carried as an insert in the *Quad City Times*. In spite of the profession's problems in communicating its theories and methods to others, the quality of the lives of millions of people has been improved because of its activities. This public response has occurred even though the profession continues to neglect the need for standardizing its services on a national and international basis. As to such standardization: Fifty different state legislatures continue to respond to the pressures of their respective in-state chiropractic elements by adopting wildly diverse chiropractic practice acts. Until such legislatures (and legislators) insist that proffered chiropractic legislation be consistent with the profession's standards of practice, rather than being unwitting allies to the confusion that now reigns, just so long will the problem continue. Lobbying pressure and politics-as-usual are no answer to the need for practice standards relating to a science. An answer to this "Tower of Babel" of state laws continues to elude us. Standardized lexicon, parameters of practice and quality application are the three basic ingredients necessary to bring order out of seeming chaos. The public would be the beneficiary of all of the legislatures. Not an easy task, but a goal for which we must continue to strive.

That letter could have been written today and been just as relevant. This commentary illustrates the kind of thought process that was the hallmark of Jerry McAndrews. He made no apologies for his profession and worked tirelessly to advance it in a professional, ethical and scientific manner.

For those who knew Jerry, his passion and dedication to advance the chiropractic profession were legendary. Here is a passage from a letter, sent to me in the early 1980s, which shows the depth of his commitment and understanding about the issues confronting our profession. (I wonder how many of us would like to have things we wrote 25 years ago read today. Would they be viewed as ridiculous, rational, rambling or relevant?) This particular exchange was about image:

Dear Lou:

Another opinion I would like to convey is relative to the comment concerning research and education. In my view, these activities would never add appreciably to chiropractic's cultural authority without the presence of the federal injunction against organized medicine (or the threat of such an injunction). Its direct or indirect control of perhaps one-half trillion dollars in health care and related expenditures per year provides it the means to deny us anything but a maverick, hampers our role (marginal) in society. Even the courts are almost without means to tame the arrogance of this Stalin-like operation.

Nevertheless, improved education and research, and their product of an increased number of highly educated spokesmen, will have virtually no impact on society without our wrestling from the AMA and its allies the insurance industry and a myriad of interconnected elements like the Heart Fund, the United Way, the Epilepsy Foundation, the Cerebral Palsy and Cystic Fibrosis organizations, etc., and virtually all of their supporters represented at essentially every societal Ball throughout every year. Balls at which no chiropractors are present, at least, with their professional identity, the ability to associate itself with medicine's long-term effort to remove us from the reimbursable marketplace as a non-essential service. When I have spoken of our need to control the creation of our own image, I am not certainly commenting on the great need for standards of care, for research and for other objective activities and thinking; I am rather saying this: Medicine is not as good as the image it has partly paid to create for itself (to also improve its cultural authority), dentistry is not as good as its image, and the law (I'm not discussing its practice) is not as good as its image; but, chiropractic is already better than its image. It has simply never been in the ballgame (or ballpark) of controlling its own identity. It has instead tended to exert most of its meager resources inward, arguing with fellow practitioners about such things as scope of practice; exactly where organized medicine has planned us to be. To look outward is foreign to us; we are too preoccupied. Again, as the AMA has determined. So ... image making is not intended to build a façade over a poor profession but to tell the truth - through Madison Avenue - of how much better we are than people have been told by the AMA. I believe we must develop our position as an essential service with sound data - or at least hypothesis - to support it, all the while raising our professional investment in research.

The clarity of his thoughts demonstrates his understanding. Again, this letter easily could have been written today, and demonstrates that his entire life was shaped by the courage of his convictions. He was an eternal optimist who knew that the profession could only advance by means of internal reform.

Jerry, as most of you know, loved his brother George. He was distressed that he was unable to attend his brother's induction into the Texas Chiropractic College's Hall of Honor in 1992. He wrote to George in his usual storytelling manner:

Dear George:

I cannot think of anyone who would be more deserving of this professional honor than you. You have always been exceptionally committed to your clients and your family. This trait, in my view, is what you brought to our chiropractic profession in the early seventies.

I will never forget one particular story from the early years of the antitrust suit - everyone should know about it: After considerable effort to gain an opportunity to talk to the 40-year General Counsel of the American Medical Association, you were finally granted access [he had held this position through all the years of the formal boycott]. Upon sitting down in his office, his first words were, "We are going to drag you chiropractors to death." You asked what he meant by this. His response, "We have a one hundred and fifty million dollar a year budget, you will never be able to hang in there." You said, "You apparently have not heard about me. My father was a chiropractor, my brother and sister are, and twenty-five other members of my family are; one day, after you run out of money, I will be sitting here looking at you across this desk. ...They learned you meant what you said. Here we are, sixteen years later, and you still haven't stopped, even with the Wilk victory now behind you. I know you put in far more effort to help our profession than is generally known. I know, for example, that you have hundreds of miles through the state of Michigan, alone, taking depositions on representatives of the Michigan State Medical Society, and sleeping in your car by the side of the road so your firm's "clock" did not need to run, to keep costs down.

I saw when, court day after court day, you showed up to face as many as twenty-nine attorneys representing the other side: the fourteen defendants, the AMA and the others. I know you (jokingly?) answered - when asked how many attorneys were working your side - "When I get busy, I will get another one, until then I just slip into a phone booth and disrobe." I know you said to the defendants, "Before this is over, gentlemen, I will bring the U.S.S. Battleship Missouri down the St. Lawrence seaway. You will be standing on the shore in your morning coats and top hats and I will receive your unconditional surrender."

By installing you in the chiropractic Hall of Fame, it assures you a place in our profession's history. For this reason, if for no other, I am happy that I am around to bask in your reflected glory. As a brother, I have always held great affection for you. This goes on as usual, my respect for what you have done for my profession I wanted to make clear with this letter, Thank you, Jerry.

This personal exchange is the essence of true love for a profession and admiration, love and respect for a brother. Example after example exists in my files and reflects on the person, the professional, the statesman and friend. There are hundreds of examples to demonstrate the depth of his commitment and the courage he often displayed with his wit and ability to use disarming stories to make his point.

Jerry McAndrews will be buried in a family plot in Clinton, Iowa, on Thursday, June 15, 2006. In memory of his long career and dedication to the advancement of his beloved profession, a memorial research fund has been established. This will properly dignify his memory and by the judicious distribution of proceeds, his passion for the advancement of chiropractic through research will live on. If you are so moved to support a memorial to Jerry McAndrews, contributions can be made to:

NCMIC FOUNDATION  
Jerome F. McAndrews, D.C.,  
Memorial Research Fund  
NCMIC Group, Inc.  
14001 University Avenue

Clive, IA 50325

All weekend, my phone has been ringing since the news of Jerry's passing became known. Each conversation is highlighted with an illuminating tale of wit and wisdom in the uniquely Jerry McAndrews manner. Dr. McAndrews left a special impression on the thousands of DCs who heard him spin his tales of chiropractic history or read something he authored on a topic about which he was passionate. The consummate professional, the modern-day techno-geek with cell phone in one hand and Blackberry in the other, Jerry was ready to fight or to frolic, but he was always ready.

It is obvious that he left a mark on the profession he so loved, and many will miss him greatly. Father, husband, brother, advisor, administrator, educator, spokesman, orator, diplomat and friend, he has truly left a mark that will not be erased by time. His love of his family was evident by the pride with which he spoke of his children. He will be buried in a simple ceremony with family and friends to honor his memory. The following passage is so appropriate for Jerry:

"I'm Free"

Don't grieve for me, now I'm free.  
I am following the path, God laid for me.  
I took his hand when I heard his call;  
I turned my back and left it all.  
I could not stay another day;  
To laugh, to love, to work or play.  
Tasks left undone must stay that way;  
I've found that peace at the close of the day.  
If my parting has left a void,  
Then fill it with remembered joy.  
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss;  
Ah, yes these things I too will miss.  
Be not burdened with times of sorrow,  
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.  
My life's been full, I've savored much;  
Good friends, good times, a loved ones touch.  
Perhaps my time seemed all to brief;  
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.



Lift up your heart and share it with me-

God wanted me now. He set me free.

- *Anonymous*

We will all, in some way, miss this chiropractic icon!

JULY 2006

©2024 Dynamic Chiropractic™ All Rights Reserved