

JEAN BURKE

1985 -1986

My memories of AGPAM are sometimes limited because I don't know if I can remember. At age 74 you tend to forget and I threw out all my material regarding AGPAM when I moved two years ago. I did, however, keep my 1982 Comedy Award Clown and my National Presidents Award clock. They are some of my prized possessions and bring back many good memories.

I recall some of the following trips and fun after our meaningful meetings.

Memories: April 1976, Boone Iowa. Our first organization meeting. Al Wilson, our first Hawkeye Chapter president becoming a CPAM in 1379 (not many in the country at the time). Robert Cox, a regional director who helped us organize. Some of the many friends I recall are: Mary Jo Clendenan (who I roomed with at a lot of our meetings, I recall that we had to have a radio on so that she could go to sleep), my good friend, Marilyn Rusnak (her death really upset me), Duane Voshell, Joyce Carroll, Al Wilson, Vickie Drish, Eleanor Ward, Jean Barker, Jerry Mahrenholtz, Bill Wise, Larry Armstrong, Ron Waggoner, Craig Lee, Steve Schuver, John Chiovaro, Ron Christenson, Dawn Simon and many, many more. If I forgot your name, please forgive me. My excuse again is my age.

Some of our speakers were: Carole Harder (I even still have one of her relaxation tapes), Dr. Peter Wirtz and Stan Levins. I don't remember the titles of all of the topics but if you didn't learn a lot from them you must have been sleeping during the presentation. The topics often included admissions, insurance, receivables, collections and motivation.

Some of the trips included outing at nationals which gave me many fond memories; Going to the Board Walk and casinos in Atlantic City where Eleanor and I met the craps dealer at 2:00 or 3:00Am so that he could teach us the game although I still don't know how the game goes. Also the cost of a small piece of pies was \$4.50. In Salt Lake City, me and some of my friends had already heard the speaker so we took off and watched the Morman Tabernacle Choir practice. It was beautiful. In one town in Florida we were warned not to go to a certain part of town but, of course, that is where we ended up. In San Antonio the hotel lost my luggage but we saw armadillo races in the park and I still have the caricature drawing by a local artist there.

Our state meetings were also memorable. Our many trips to the Amana's where the seminars were at one hotel and we would party at the hotel across the road the usually had a Western band. We all had a good time, dancing, drinking and telling stories. We had a river boat cruise on the Mississippi and numerous meetings in Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, and hosting a national presidents meeting in Okoboji.

We were a close knit bunch (about 10 – 15) of us who got together, especially at night after the seminars. We ate out at different places, had a few drinks (sometimes a few too many) and enjoyed each others company.

I was AGPAM (now AAHAM) president:	1985 - 1986
Vice President	1983 - 1984
Secretary	1981 - 1982
On various other committees	1978 – 1980

Some of my awards include:

Woman of the year	1977, 1979 & 1983
Comedy of the year	1980 & 1982
Presidents Award	1981
National Presidents Award	1986

I served on several National Committees. AGPAM seminars were the best education I received for the job. I went from Office Manager in just a few years. Thanks AGPAM

1987-1990

Vicki Drish

When asked to write about some of the history of Hawkeye Chapter with emphasis on the time period that I served as the Chapter's President several thoughts came to mind. Many of these thoughts brought a smile, some chuckles and occasionally a laugh at loud at some of the memories.

I remember many times Eleanor Ward, Jean Burke, Mary Jo Clendenning, Marilyn Rusnak and myself cleaning up the hospitality rooms and rinsing out the pop and beer cans so we could take back to the store to get our nickel deposit back for each one. We did that so we could buy more for the next meeting, our funds were limited and we needed every nickel we could get. Jean Burke and I often would buy extra snacks for our hospitality room as again, funds were limited so we donated to assure there would be enough for everyone.

My first Proclamation signing as President with the Governor also brought back a memory that I still smile about. Normally those Proclamation signings were fairly routine with Chapter Officers, Board and various members attending. We would have our pictures taken with the governor then all go our separate ways. Not this time! My first term as President and naturally there would have to be a very "hot healthcare topic" (which I don't remember what it was). It had created enough interest that one of the local radio stations found out we were with the Governor and when we emerged from the signing, they proceeded to start asking questions. Well, I remember becoming totally unable to perform my duties as President and step up to the plate (or microphone in this case) and speak to these news people other than to say "Eleanor Ward will be able to answer your questions gentlemen" and of course, Eleanor did. I remember thinking I should have answered these gentlemen! By then, it was easy for me to think that way because I was walking out of the building and down the steps of the Capital building!

Many, many remembrances do come to mind but perhaps the most memorable one for me, as President, was the speaker who I booked for the entire fall meeting which was held in the Amana Colonies. Those of you who were there know exactly which speaker I am talking about! She was the speaker from h..., no, Texas who promised many of us "free" trips to visit in Texas because she liked us so much!

Jean Burke and I had listened to her speak at the National meeting in San Antonio, Texas and we both (as well as many others from the other Chapters) thought she was a great speaker. Jean and I thought she would be great to have as a speaker for Hawkeye Chapter. She spoke on Medicare legislation as well as healthcare legislation in general when speaking in Texas. We thought she was knowledgeable, witty, had a good sense of humor and in general a good speaker our membership would enjoy listening to.

Her resume on the National meeting agenda listed her as having spoken to a few other State Chapters including her state of Texas. I contacted these Chapters for references on her and they all spoke very highly of her but they also told me she was very hard to get a hold of to pinpoint to times and dates! That should have been my first warning. After numerous calls to her office with assurances by her “staff” she would return my calls after much time had elapsed, she finally did. That should have been my second warning. We had made our first connection but after that, once again, numerous calls back and forth between her office and now, her home. Third warning you would think by now, wouldn’t you? But, I persevered because I called these other Chapters again to make sure they thought she was worth all trouble I was experiencing. They all assured me she was! Finally, got her booked, arrangements made, she was flying into Cedar Rapids and Duane Voshell picked her up at the airport and brought her to the Amana Colonies. Duane had never seen her before so Jean and I described her as best we could based on our recollection of her, now, almost a year later.

Jean Burke, Sue Riedal, Donna Olson, Coleen Kimble, myself and perhaps a couple of others were at the Holiday Inn at the Amana’s when Duane arrived with our guest the night before our meeting. I remember looking at her and thinking this lady is much taller, much thinner and has a lot longer hair than I remember her, but... people can change in a year! We invited her to have dinner with us and during dinner I kept looking at her and thinking this is just not the lady I remember. She did however mention some things during dinner that reflected on when she spoke in Texas that helped to assure me somewhat this was the same lady.

Once dinner was over our guest speaker retired to her room. Jean, I and the others stayed downstairs for awhile and Jean turned to me and said “she doesn’t even look like the same lady we saw in Texas”! I tried to rationalize that she had lost weight, was wearing higher heels and had let her hair grow. All perfect rationalizations!

The next day I introduced her as our guest speaker, mentioning all of her accomplishments (if I didn't, she would have, believe me) I told all attending that Jean Burke and I had heard her speak at the Annual National Institute in Texas and we felt she had so much to offer to us that she would be our speaker for the entire meeting and would be discussing several topics of interest to us all. With that said, I sat down, she took over and I don't think she discussed one of the topics we had brought her to Iowa to discuss! Well...maybe one. She did however go on and on about her accomplishments in her career, and many other subjects that were irrelevant to what she was to be speaking on. We broke for lunch and after lunch, there she was again, however this time we had lost probably three quarters of our audience... some went golfing, some went shopping, some probably just went anywhere she wasn't! For the few hearty souls who did return I believe a few of us came away with a tee shirt, maybe a pen or perhaps a notepad from her but that was pretty much it. Oh yeah, we did get those promises of the "free, all expense paid" trip to Texas, but like her topics she was to speak on, they never materialized either. Needless to say, I never, never booked another speaker for the entire meeting again. I also have yet to live that one down but I look back on it now and can laugh because to this day I still do not believe the lady that came to Iowa was the same lady who spoke at the National meeting in Texas!

With many memories of fun, laughter, learning, and most importantly the opportunities to meet peers for whom I have a great deal of respect for and the privilege of their friendship, I salute Hawkeye Chapter AAHAM on the 30th Anniversary!

Respectfully Submitted
Vick L. Drish, CPAM

JEAN BARKER

1997 – 1998

As I look back at my experience as president of Hawkeye Chapter I am reminded of the fact that my memory is slipping rapidly.

I have been a member since 1978 and I have grown up with a number of outstanding individuals. When I started I was extremely young and in awe of several of the members. I felt that I was on the outside watching an awesome show of talent and knowledge that I would never be able to possess. As it turns out I was right but the members were so kind and generous with their time and knowledge that it wasn't long before I felt comfortable with the group. Listening to Craig, Duane, Mike, Vicki and Eleanor convinced me to try for my certification and I am so glad that I did. I actually managed to get certification in patient accounting and clinic accounting. It took a managed to get certification in patient accounting and clinic accounting. It took a couple to tries but I am grateful to everyone for the encouragement they gave.

I remember my first meeting as president and I was scared to death. I was so afraid that I would say something wrong or forget someone that I made myself sick. I did get through it and I did forget some of the sponsors. Over the next few meetings I managed to gain confidence but I do remember forgetting to swear in a couple of board members that were elected and I had to do it at the next meeting.

I looked up some of the newsworthy events that happened while I was president and I found some interesting events:

- Timothy McVeigh was sentenced to death for the Oklahoma City bombings
- Princess Diana and Mother Teresa both died
- Two were convicted of the 1993 World Trade Center bombings
- There was a setback in the Middle East peace process
- President Clinton accused in White House sex scandal
- Iraq ended cooperation with UN arms inspectors
- President Clinton ordered air strikes on Iraq
- India, Pakistan and North Korea test missiles

I discovered in finding this old news that it is amazing that what happened then is so similar to what is occurring today. I guess it is like AAHAM, what we did in the past is just a forecast of the future. There were so many knowledgeable members, finding and affording good speakers and getting people involved. The same is true today and it requires effort from everyone.

Thanks for the memories and the opportunities. It has been a pleasure to serve and be associated with so many great people.

**Mike Dobbs,
AAHAM President from 1999 – 2000**

One of the things I remember about my Presidency was learning a new three-letter word –Y2K. The thing I remember most about dealing with Y2K was that it meant planning topics for our meetings was a lot easier as everyone wanted to hear about Y2K. Seems everyone wanted to make sure they were prepared for the day the computers took over the world! As I think back on that time, and all the hoopla what was going to happen, it's almost comical to realize how worked up we get over the unknown. The other major thing about is our attempt to hold a meeting in the Okoboji area as the group had requested Okoboji as a possible meeting place. Knowing it was risky to plan a meeting that far away from the center of the state, we decided to invite HFMA members, it was difficult to draw a large number of attendees to the area, but for those that were able to attend, it was quite an enjoyable setting. I remember the weather being almost perfect, and also, how much fun it was to have an outside barbeque and bonfire by the lake. I think all past presidents can relate to the feeling of holding the last meeting of your Presidency. That last meeting may be the most enjoyable as you know you will be handing over all the responsibilities of setting up and holding future meetings to someone else. Knowing this, I decided that during that last meeting it would be a great time to sneak out and get in some golf (there are always vendors around to golf with). I remember that Jeff Stadds was speaking on collection practices and he would have things completely under control, allowing me to get in a few holes of golf. Once I had completed my round, I distinctly remember coming back to the hotel and finding Jean Barker waiting outside for my return. In my rush to get out and golf, I had neglected to sign a check for Jeff's services, and Jeff being the ultimate expert on collection practices, was not about to leave until he was paid. He also was smart enough to know whom in our group he would pick to handle the collection chores, and I must say, Jean was a very good choice!!

I am not sure if this happened during the time that I was President, but I have to share this story anyway! I remember being awoken late one night (late back then was after midnight) by a very weak knock on the door. By the time I got up and answered my door though, no one was around, which I thought was rather odd, but I dismissed it and went back to bed .I was having breakfast the next morning with one of our members who I am going to Leave unnamed. He confessed to me that he had indeed knocked on my door and didn't stay long as he wasn't sure it was my door and had a reason for not wanting anyone else to see him. He apparently had been awoken by a knock on his door in the middle of the night and went to answer it and didn't find anyone. The problem though is that he has a habit of sleeping in the nude and made the sleepy mistake of walking out in the hotel's hallway and letting his room door close behind him!!

Having no pockets to carry a room key, he was stranded in the middle of the night in the hotel's hallway. He thought he knew which room was mine, but wasn't confident enough to wait around until I got up to answer. He took the stairs down to the lobby area and hid between a couple of vending machines. From that area he was able to yell to the front desk and explain his situation. I am sure that the clerk on duty had to fight back the laughter as he produced another room key for our "special" AAHAM member. I can only imagine what may have transpired if any elderly lady had gotten the munchies late that night

Craig Lee
AAHAM
1993 – 1994

I became a member of AAHAM in 1981, became certified in 1984, and about that same time was elected to the board of directors. At a lunch during the late 80's or early 90's, Jean Barker, Duane Voshell and myself agreed to run for the office of president if all of us agreed to support each other. We called this making a "pact with the devil". In the fall of 1992 I was fortunate enough to become the President of AAHAM.

Bill Clinton and I both took office in January of 1993. There was no Monica in my office, but ironically the Clinton administration did affect the debate on national healthcare at the time. Hilary was put in charge of reforming healthcare and made some radical suggestions. Without remembering all the details I know there were suggestions of a universal healthcare for all, and a type of capitated reimbursement that would have truly affected all of us in healthcare. It would be interesting today to see what those reforms were, and if they would have really worked. The debate however continues today with a true need to change our national healthcare system. Some future AAHAM board will be setting up education sessions to inform members of these changes I am sure.

My first meeting as president was in the spring of 1993. The meeting was held at what was then the Sheraton Inn in Des Moines across from Living History Farms. We held many of four meetings there, and I liked the location because there was a running trial just behind the hotel. Thursday night after hours many of us went to a local pub to watch the last show of "Cheers". This bar had a contest for "look a likes" and I think Duane won the prize for looking most like Norm, and Al Avis thought he was the most like Sam.

The fall meeting that year was again in Des Moines by the airport. This meeting was one of the first where we had our awards at lunch and had a murder mystery dinner theater that night. I still have a video of that night and some members still call me Mr. Bemus (the school principal). We had a lot of fun that night, and Mary Leedy was the member who came up with the idea and did much of the work for it.

In the spring of 1994 we were at the Sheraton Inn in Cedar Rapids. I remember that we were to have a speaker from Zimmerman and Associates on Thursday morning, and Mike Dobbs told me as I came downstairs that the speaker was not going to make it. I did not believe him at first (I thought for sure Luke put him up to it), but the original speaker was not there. They had sent a replacement that actually did a very good job. (At that I would have taken anyone who could speak for 3 hours). One of the nights the after hours crowd got a little carried away in the hospitality room and had a food fight. I couldn't get anyone to fess up to this for months- not even Arlen.

The fall meeting was back at the Sheraton in Des Moines. We again tried a “theme” to our banquet and this it was a western theme. It was not quite like the murder mystery, but we did have some of the same musical acts appear again. I think Larry Howe missed his calling. I do remember during the awards I was trying to do a Dave Letterman’s Top Ten list and was heckled from the crowd. Thanks you Al.

The issues for the board during that time are similar to today. We were always trying to get new members, we wanted to push for certification, and finding quality speakers took a lot of time.

One of the things that were happening at about this time was interacting with Doug Strohbeen from Medicare. He wanted to start a focus group and he used primarily AAHAM members. HE coordinated his meeting to be just before the AAHAM meetings. He then not only attended the AAHAM meetings, but became one of us. At the minimum AAHAM members had a name of someone from Medicare who they could call if needed. The committee is still active today and still has many AAHAM representatives.

As the representative of Iowa for the national board, I was privileged to be able to travel to Florida, Colorado, Arizona, and California and meet many people from across the country that ultimately became part of the part of the leadership of AAHAM. It was always nice to know that all states and providers had similar problems that we could work together on. From these meetings we started talking with Minnesota about having regional meetings and I think in 1995 we had the first meeting in Rochester, Minn. I am still impressed with how much beer the Minnesota members could drink.

I have been a proud member of AAHAM for 25 years, and the organization has given me many hours of good education, a certification that I will use until I retire, and countless great memories of people who I will count as friends long after I leave healthcare. Thanks for letting me be part of this group.

Larry B.Howe
President
Hawkeye Chapter AAHAM
2201 – 2002

In the fall 2001 we held a joint meeting with the Illinois Chapter in Bettendorf, Iowa at the casino hotel. Because of the September 11th attack on the twin towers in New York City; our speakers were unable to attend the meeting because of all flights being grounded. The meeting still took place and the speakers spoke to us via speaker phone from California. Our spring meeting for 2002 was held at a family resort on Gull Lake, MN.

During this time period, AAHAM began seeing a decline in membership on the national level and in our own Chapter. National and our local chapter began a drive to get new members in hospitals to join.