

# 2011 Annual Seminar of the American Academy of Cardiovascular Perfusion

## Thomas G. Wharton Memorial Lecture

Thank you, Ian!

Dobbs – Horgan – Kurusz – Reed  
Lawrence – Hill – Meserko – Stofer  
Mesher – Williams – Crane – MacDonald  
Reaves – Richmond – Clark – Berryessa  
Palanzo – Delgado – Chan – Groom  
Babka – Toomasian – Ogella – Faulkner  
Beavers – Sistino – Krosliwitz – Frazier  
and Shearer

JERI DOBBS	WILLIAM HORGAN	MARK KURUSZ	CHARLES REED
EARL LAWRENCE, JR.	AARON HILL	JOHN MESERKO	RAYMOND STOFER
EILEEN MESHER	DENNIS WILLIAMS	TERRY CRANE	JAMES MACDONALD
SUE REAVES	JERRY RICHMOND	DIANE CLARK	RICHARD BERRYESSA
DAVID PALANZO	FRANK DELGADO	RICHARD CHAN	ROBERT GROOM
RONALD BABKA	JOHN TOOMASIAN	DAVID OGELLA	SHERRY FAULKNER
JAMES BEAVERS	JOSEPH SISTINO	ROBERT KROSLWITZ	THOMAS FRAZIER
IAN SHEARER			

This is the historical record of those who have lead the Academy ... men & women who have shaped the very landscape of our profession. Some of these are in this room today, some are retired, and some, sadly, have passed away and are no longer with us.

These are names that, to me, conjure many emotions and memories ... and quite honestly, when I survey the accomplishments, vision, strength of character, and greatness represented here ... I am deeply humbled and feeling quite under-qualified to be standing before you today.

Perhaps the ***only thing*** I can match-up on -- is my love for this profession and the people in this organization.

And so, with that as my strongest card to play ... I hope to honor all these individuals and especially to remember the name that preceded all of them:

Thomas G. Wharton ... For whom we remember each year with this lecture

It was Thomas Wharton in 1979 whom provided \$2,000 to “Start that perfusion education organization we have talked about for so long”. This was the spark that ignited the formation of the American Academy of Cardiovascular Perfusion. And for 32 years the Academy flames have been kindled and stoked -- by you the members

### The Thomas G. Wharton Memorial Lecture

*“Start that perfusion education organization we have talked about for so long”*

And so, the title of this talk is ...

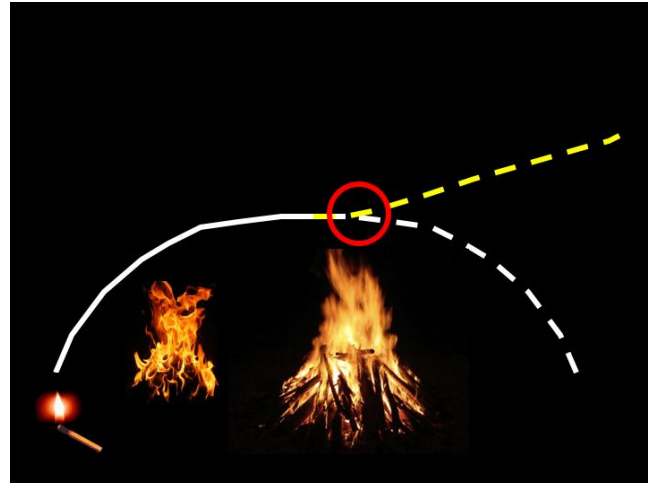
### ***Keep the Fire Burning***

Today I will use fire as a metaphor because I believe that organizations (like the Academy) can be compared to one of my favorite things -- a campfire ...

Let me explain how professional organizations are similar to a campfire

In both cases there is a predictable progression

- begin small, slowly and vulnerably
- Then they catch ... rapidly and burn bright
- A plateau is reached and
- Then there comes a defining moment, a *critical point*
- Either new logs are added to the existing ... or it slowly loses intensity and cools down



I believe that the Academy is at such a *critical point* in its lifecycle. Will the Academy be refueled? ... Or will it cool?

One of our greatest strengths may also, at the same time, be our greatest weakness. There is a lot of grey hair (for some of us, expanding waistlines) in this room. Yes, we are, by and large, a “Seasoned group”, but that also makes us rich in experiences in all areas of perfusion: academic, research, clinical, departmental, professional, and entrepreneurial. We are blessed in this way.

At the same time we must understand that over the next decade nearly 60% of our current Academy Fellows will be retired. We have a lot of trusty seasoned logs who have, and will continue to burn hot and strong in our profession.

In fact, if you have been a perfusionist for 20 years or more ...please stand-up.

I would like to thank you for your service to your patients, to your colleagues, your hospitals and to the perfusion community. I know the personal sacrifices that you have made over the decades doing what we do ... doing what Bob Groom, in his Wharton Lecture, described as “*our sacred mission*”. Please remain standing for a moment while I talk to those seated.

To those sitting ... If you wonder what you get by being a member of the Academy ... Look around this room, the experiences and wisdom contained in the people standing cannot be calculated.

Sure They need reading glasses and They may not google as fast as you, or be able to text without looking, but I guarantee that is not a clinical, technical, interpersonal, or departmental issue that they you may be facing ... that they haven't already faced.

Thank you, you may be seated

Not only are these Seasoned professionals are vital to our profession and the Academy campfire, but we can learn from them:

- they have found a way day after day, year after year, decade after decade, to get up each morning, put on their scrubs, grab the pump clamps, adjust their attitudes (if need be) and provide the best care they can possible give.
- They have found a way to balance their passion for the profession with devotion to family (through successes and failures)
- If you want have a long, fulfilled career in perfusion, then get around these kinds of people!

But we need new logs or we will eventually cool

I am so grateful to Bill Riley & Rich Melchior who on behalf of the Academy have worked so hard to reach out to perfusion students and newly graduated perfusionists. This is our future as not only an organization but as a profession.

If you are a perfusion student or someone who has been in the field 4 or less years, please stand up.

Thank you all for being here!

You bring energy and freshness to the conference and I hope you have felt welcomed!



To the students; Perfusion training is without a doubt the most difficult of any healthcare profession. I know how hard you've worked ... and I say Press-on. You are about to enter the most amazing profession. To the new perfusionists; the first few years on the job contain some of life's most challenging and stressful moments. Don't be discouraged as you find your career niche.

You may be seated.

I think it is natural for one generation to look look at the next and have concerns. After all, we, the seasoned perfusionists have devoted our energies - body, soul, and spirit into this profession. We want to know that our life's work will be advanced by the next ...

As someone who works at a perfusion school, I get questions from my contemporaries about the next generation.

Do they have a strong work ethic?

Will they go the extra mile?

Do they understand that they will be regularly inconvenienced in this profession?

Do they have strength of character and heart ... or will they wither (or worse), whine when they face the challenges?

Do they “get it”?

Do they have the same empathy for patients, the same love, the same internal recognition of the immense responsibility?

Do they really understand the sacred role of the cardiovascular perfusionist?

All I can say, is that what I have seen, the people who have just sat down are some of the most amazing individuals I have had the pleasure of knowing. They have what you have on the inside ... they have the right stuff ... get behind them inspire them and our future of our profession will be in good hands!

And if we are lucky enough to attract them into this organization ... then Academy will burn brightly into the future

The Academy, to the uniformed can be quite mysterious at first. Like any organization there is a distinct personality and group culture and ethos which must be understood.

Some of this can be seen in our great traditions!

Like our Fireside Chats format ... this goes back to the very beginning of the Academy (and thank you Jimmy Beck and Greg Smigla for arranging these 19 FSCs and all the facilitators ... thank you)

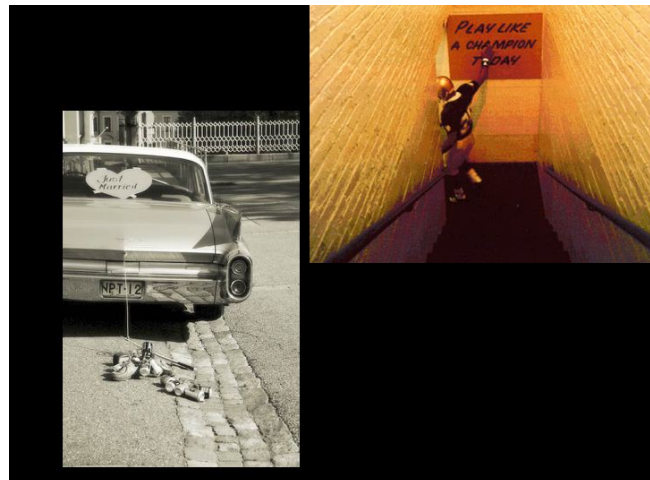
It's part of our culture its traditional ... I'm a sucker for traditions. Holiday traditions, traditions at events

Like tying tin cans and old shoes on the back of newlyweds cars ...

Like interesting sports traditions ND custom of touching this sign just as they enter the stadium ...

I especially love family traditions -- I'm sure each of has our own unique family traditions

Let me share one of my families traditions. I'm not sure how or when this custom began, but like all traditions I dutifully passed it down to my kids.



Here it is ... When driving on a family trip or vacation, whenever we approached a state line sign, let's say "Welcome to Virginia"

Just when that sign was just visible in the distance we would all in unison begin chanting "Weeerrrrrrreeee .....iiiiinnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnn (and then building to crescendo and synchronizing with the exact moment the car crossed the state line) we would fist pump and yell in celebration "Virginia"!!!

My 3 daughters are almost grown now, but this tradition persists with gusto. I often thought how ridiculous it must seem to our travel guests!



I'm embarrassed now to share that with you. Silly to be sure, ... but to us also very significant. Significant, because somehow, each time we do this -- it connects us together with a hundred other previous trips in our journey together as a family. It helps us remember those wonderful times and, yes, the challenging times we have has together. It ties one generation to the next and is a least (in some small measure) something constant in our ever-changing world,

We, in the Academy have our own unique traditions that at first glance appear well... unique.

Like these medallions that we wear around our necks each year at the induction ceremonies this tradition goes back decades to the earliest of Academy Meetings

It's a tradition ... we wear medals. We wear little medals like this. Big medals like this. Some of us augment the standard issue with supplementary medals



It is symbolic the of recognized and accepted commitment that a Fellow makes to participate and give back to profession through this organization.

I must admit, however, that long ago prior to becoming a Fellow I didn't understand this very well.

In fact, when the tuxedo clad, medallion wearing fellows strolled by I used to roll my eyes and snicker to myself and

Imagine the great splash that the enormous medallion would make if it accidentally slipped from around the neck into the soup bowl!





Today, however, I have seen it a different way and like any tradition worth its salt ... I wouldn't change a thing

I see it as part of continuity.

Now, each year when I wear the tux and place that medal around my neck, I smile at myself in the mirror ... silly? Maybe. But I now see the significance.

Significant, because each time we do this and come together it somehow connects us with countless other moments and marks our journey in this profession. It binds one generation of perfusionist to the next. It helps us remember those wonderful times and challenging times we have had together as a family of perfusionists.



It is at least (in some small measure) something constant in an ever-changing professional world.

In the end, whether it is a country, a family, or an organization it's the commitment we feel toward each other and the powerful relationships that are forged that sustain us.

In fact, Stephen Covey the author of 7 Habits of Highly Effective People touches on the human element by defining an organization as nothing more than "a relationship with a purpose"

**Organization = a relationship with a purpose**

One of our purposes is here continuing education and on this topic I refer to what William Butler Yeats said ...  
**"Education is Not the Filling of a Pail, but the Lighting of a Fire"**

I remember about 25 years ago when I was in perfusion school. I became interested in this new thing called *Complement Activation*.

*"Education is Not the Filling of a Pail,  
but the Lighting of a Fire"*

**William Butler Yeats (Poet, 1865-1939)**

My instructors Bill Harris and Mark Hatchell encouraged me said that it would be interesting to study this in neonatal ECMO patients.

It excited me and I went to work. Now please remember, this pre-dated the internet, pubmed, google, and email. I went to the medical library and I came across an article authored by the great perfusionist LeRoy Ferries who published on the effect of methylprednisolone on complement activation. I had questions on where to start my research in this area, so I wrote LeRoy a brief letter introducing myself and asked him advice on how to conduct a research project on complement activation in neonatal ECMO.

I felt funny about bothering him ... he is a busy leader in the profession ... why would he put aside his busy schedule to answer me ... a student, a nobody.

Two weeks later I received a 3-page typed written response. On page one was technical answer to my query. On pages 2 and 3 were tremendous words of support and encouragement. Admonitions to remain a seeker of knowledge and a contributor to perfusion community, how one person can make a big difference in this field. In that moment, a fire was started within me. LeRoy knew that more could be accomplished than answering my questions and filling the pail with information, rather a whole career could be enriched and fire could be started through inspiration!

Likewise, I value the opportunity to put my students next to inspiring people like in this photo of a Mark Kurusz and Timothy Willcox at a previous Academy meeting.

My job becomes 10-fold easier as a perfusion educator if I don't just fill the student's pail with facts, information, and knowledge, but rather, if I can help light the fire within, encourage them, open up to them the marvels of our profession, somehow inspire them.



When that happens they will absorb things with such affinity like a young boy who falls in love with baseball and suddenly has the capacity to learn and recall encyclopedic volumes of baseball data!

Recently a student from our program, Ashleigh Trew, had some questions regarding fatigue and safety and contacted Mark Kurusz. Mark not only took the time to make some great suggestions, but also encouraged her in studies ... it was a "wow" moment for her.

Thank you Mark for inspiring the next generation ...

I want to be like LeRoy Ferries and Mark Kurusz and like so many of you here lighting fires whenever the opportunity presents itself!

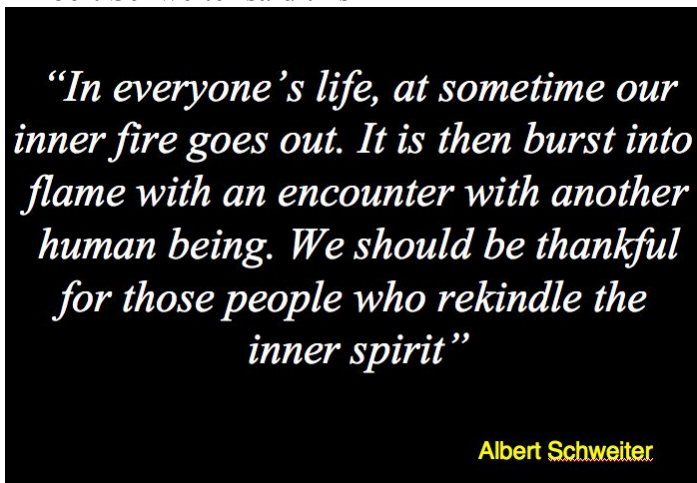
I want to be a *Perfusion Pyromaniac* ...

And this can take place in many ways. Several years ago, Bill Harris came to our school in Syracuse and spoke to our students. In his presentation he said something that has stuck with me.

He said, “You will have some dark days in this profession. You WILL have some really Dark Days”.

Days of discouragement, and moments of tremendous self-doubt. Bad days ... you all know what I’m talking about. Days where you will empty yourself emotionally, physically, and spiritually and the fire inside feels nearly extinguished.

Albert Schweiter said this



Yes, we have strong meetings with outstanding content, but it’s not just about filling the pail, The thing to me which makes the Academy so meaningful is the people. This organization would be cold and the content lifeless without the human element.

We need each other ... we need encouragement and sometimes we all need to be pushed back into the middle of the campfire. We need the warmth and heat from the significant people around

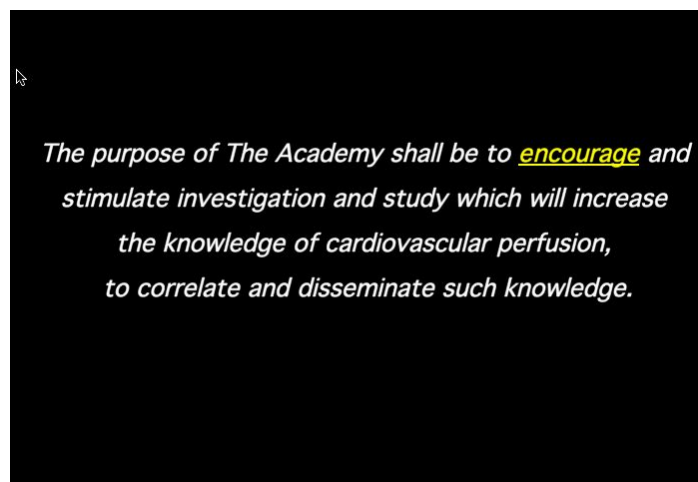
us.

In my career, I have been so fortunate to be surrounded by unbelievable people like Ian Shearer, Bruce Searles, Bill Harris, John Toomasian, Bob Groom, Jeff Riley, Aaron Hill and I can’t even begin to finish the list ... who have provided me with the vitality of caring and encouragement.

In some ways the Academy purpose statement takes on new meaning when viewed in this light .

The purpose of the Academy shall be to ENCOURAGE ...

Maybe ... all we need to do is just stop right there ...





In conclusion, being your president has been the single greatest honor of my professional life!

Keep being who you are.

Keep building up the down-hearted.

Keep inspiring those around you.

Reach out to the young men and women  
and mentor them.

This honors our founders work ... this  
honors Thomas Wharton

And THIS is how we will ... keep the  
fire burning!

Thank You!



Delivered by Edward M. Darling, CCP on January 29, 2011 in Reno, NV.