



NEWSLETTER

Summer 2007

Montana Academy of Family Physicians

2021 11th Avenue, Suite 1

Helena, MT 59601-4890

Phone: 406-443-4000

Fax: 406-443-4042

Web site <http://www.montanafp.org>

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From The President...

Our mission statement for the Montana Academy of Family Physicians is straightforward: **"Promote Family Medicine; Provide education for Family Physicians; Represent the personal and professional interests of Family Physicians; and be the guiding force for quality primary care in Montana."** As with any mission statement, the task of fulfilling its directives is a daunting one for leadership yet crucial to the identity of the organization. I'd like to reflect for a moment on how we are doing in our state academy with regards to fulfilling its directives, and look to the future to envision what we might do.

That Family Medicine is at a crossroads, I think most would agree. In teaching third year students during their six week required clerkships for the last seven years, I am constantly reminded of the influences on students in choosing their career path. While inspired by my students who do choose our path, it is becoming the path less traveled. Peaking in 1996-97, the number of U.S. medical school graduates choosing family medicine has declined steadily. To use the University of Washington as an example, graduates choosing family medicine residency programs dropped from approximately 30-35 students per year to 18 students this past year. We all know at least some of the reasons: reimbursement relative to other specialties, lifestyle issues, burgeoning student debt, and continued emphasis in this health care system of specialization of services, with subsequent limitation on scope of practice. A shortage looms as the pipeline of students decreases. In Montana we are not immune to the problem that grows nationwide. So what do we do? How do we promote Family Medicine within the state?

Recognizing outstanding role model family physicians such as Dr. John Patterson of Bozeman and Dr. Mark Zilkoski of Wolf Point, the first two recipients of our Family Physician of the Year award, provides needed positive publicity for the professional commitment and impact of family physicians in their communities. Hopefully, this will challenge each of us practicing to follow their lead, and will influence high school, college, and graduate students to choose family medicine as a career that allows such positive influence on the lives of people in our communities across the state. (We are now accepting nominations for next year's recipient!) Also, beginning in 2008, the Board will have criteria established for presenting a Lifetime of Achievement Award in Family Medicine, recognizing those who have given their working lives to the practice of family medicine and have shown exemplary leadership along the way.



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From The President.....Continued



Our state chapter is working closely with the WWAMI clinical coordinator for Montana, Jay Erickson, as well as the Montana Family Medicine Residency Program in Billings, to encourage the state's commitment to primary care and rural family physicians in graduate medical education, specifically supporting a proposed enlargement of the WWAMI class and Billings residency class sizes. The Academy also financially supports attendance by students at the AAFP Student and Resident Conference and supports undergraduates interested in a career in medicine at the Montana WWAMI pre-medical conference. On the legislative side, the Academy supported the passage of a bill to enhance the MR PIP program (Montana Rural Physician Incentive Program) that passed this past session, which increased the loan repayment incentive for physicians choosing rural practices in Montana from \$45,000 over five years to \$100,000. The challenge is how to continue these efforts to help reverse the trend away from our specialty, and in so doing, improve our health care delivery in Montana. More involvement is needed by our members (now 341 active strong) in encouraging students, becoming role models and mentors, and getting involved in legislative/lobbying efforts. Comments or ideas are welcome and invited!

Providing for education has been a key task of the academy since its inception in 1950. Two main educational conferences each year are planned and run by academy members to continue the commitment to quality primary care and professional development. (See the two articles later in the newsletter!) Looking to the future, we ask members to provide their advice in topic selection or speaker choices to members of the subcommittee on CME (Tom James, Jon Miller, Rebecca Canner, Will Snider, Dennis Salisbury, Roxanne Fahrenwald, and Linda Edquest). Ideas for the future include offering SAMS courses to study and take the required SAMS modules (already popular in other state academies) during or separate from the two main meetings. We continue to encourage academy members who have areas of interest and experience in giving CME talks to contribute as well.

Serving the "personal and professional interests" of our members is perhaps the area of greatest opportunity for our state academy. Much discussion at a board level has gone into this topic of how to best use our small, but not inconsequential, accumulated financial reserves to best serve our members in this area. Options include increasing our executive assistance (for years the academy has been maintained by Linda Edquest's fantastically efficient use of just 0.1 FTE). This could have the benefits of improved connectedness within the state between its physicians and the academy, as well as support of health awareness initiatives like TAR WARS, or similar public health programs sponsored by our academy. It also could potentially increase our presence in lobbying efforts. To this end, the Board of the MAFP will have a repeat strategic planning meeting (held once every 5-6 years), with the assistance of an advisor from the AAFP, at its February meeting to set some new, long term, fiduciary objectives for our academy. Prior to that meeting, however, we will be seeking input from academy members asking for your advice. What are the two to three most significant challenges facing you in your practice and how can we, as an academy, assist you? Might these include, for example, malpractice reform, Medicaid reimbursement, or EMR? Individual phone calls and a mailed survey are likely. Stay tuned and be thinking of answers.

I look forward to serving you this year and hope that together we can continue to improve the lives of our fellow family physicians personally and professionally.

Jon Miller, MD

President Montana Academy of Family Physicians 2007-2008

**Now is the time to submit names for the next
Montana Family Physician of the year. Please
contact Linda Edquest or any of the MAFP board members for
additional information.**

2007 Summer Meeting...

Greetings from the MAFP! I hope that you are out enjoying all that Montana has to offer in what I consider the best time to be here, summer. The back porch with the sun dropping behind the Bitterroots reminds me again of why I live in this state. It is actually hard to leave on vacations during the summer, because there is so much within our borders that is still un-done, and yet to be experienced.

One of the events that has signaled the start of summer for me and my family in the past few years has been the MAFP summer conference and board meeting which was held at Fairmont Hot Springs this year. This event is usually the third weekend of June, and after it is over, the rivers retreat a little, and the mountains begin their morph from white with brown accents to green with white accents.

This year was a good conference filled with speakers on a wide variety of topics. I usually expect that I will learn something from each speaker at a given conference, but only a few will truly change my practice patterns after any conference that I have attended. The same was true at this conference. I particularly took the information provided by Dr. Ruiz on recognizing a 99214 in office coding to heart, and took a good look at how I was coding my visits. I was doing all of the work for the charge, but not dictating it, and charging 99213's instead of the 99214 that had been performed. With a little change in the way that I dictate the information that I have already obtained, I have made a significant change in my solo practice's viability in a time when little things often mean a lot. Other topics on Diabetes, group visit models for offices, and chronic pain medication management help topics will also affect how I approach my own practice.

We finished out the weekend with our Friday afternoon activities including a fly casting seminar, and golf tournament for participants and their family members, followed by our annual BBQ in the evening where we installed our new offices and presented Dr. Zilkoski with the Montana Family Physician of the Year Award.

I look forward to getting the opportunity to meet more of you in the upcoming years. Either at the Big Mountain conference at the end of January or next year during the summer conference which will be held at Chico Hot Springs.

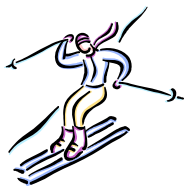
Kirk L. Crews, MD Immediate Past President

Don't Forget to mark your calendars for the

Winter Ski meeting in Whitefish, MT

Jan 29th—Feb 1st, 2008

Register online at <http://www.montanafp.org>



Mark your calendars!

The 50th annual Big Mountain Medical Conference will once again take place in Whitefish, Montana January 29 through February 1, 2008. This annual educational conference combines high-quality CME opportunities with family oriented recreation centered around winter activities in Whitefish. Speakers from around the region will be updating us with a

broad variety of subjects pertinent to the practicing family physician. As in years past, there will be 12-13 prescribed credits and plenty of chances to interact with faculty to get those “burning questions” answered. The skiing will be great with new high speed quads on Glacier Chaser and Chair 2 and the ski races for young and old will challenge us to push our limits. An evening banquet with local entertainment talent is planned as always to bring together old friends and to make new connections across the state. And don’t forget the Whitefish Winter Carnival, held the same week as the conference, culminating in the downtown parade on February 2nd. So bring your families for a few days of R&R, CME, and fun on the snow. Hope to see you there!



Jon Miller MD,
Chairperson Big Mtn conference

THE MONTANA FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENCY GRADUATING CLASS OF 2007: WHERE DID THEY GO?

The Montana Family Medicine Residency has graduated another class of six residents – and this is the first group to all start their practices in Montana. Since our start, the residency has placed over 65% of our graduates in this state but this is the first year we have had a full graduating class stay. This may be a little unusual, although we sure would like to see this every year. We can always hope.

Hanly Burton is going to practice in Bozeman, he has long wanted to return there, and is excited to be finally going home. He will join one of our past graduates, Erica Peterson in practice. We also have another residency grad in Bozeman as well, Emily Colson who started there last year.

Leah Carlburg is going up to Kalispell to practice. We have two other graduates of our residency in the Flathead area as well – Eric Brandeberry in Columbia Falls and Justin Schmidt in Kalispell.

Donna Givens will be practicing in Miles City with the Holy Rosary hospital practice, and will be near if not exactly “with” our past graduate Sue Gallo MD who is with the Billings Clinic group in Miles City.

John Foster will bring his new family medicine skills and his past surgical training to bear in Hardin, partnering with the family medicine group there and again with one of our grads Kirstin Morissette.

Steve Halvorson is satisfying his desire both for practice in Montana and furthering his interest in wilderness medicine by joining the Billings Clinic regional practice group while planning a several month medical program in Nepal this fall.

Mike Geurin is staying right here, moving one office over from his chief resident office, as he joins our faculty here at the residency. He will complete a faculty development fellowship at the University of Washington this year.

In addition to our most recent class, two of our past grads have returned from a couple of years overseas and will be working in Lincoln at the Community Health Center branch clinic there. **Justin Smith** and **Courtney Crowell** will be sharing a position there.

The residency continues to be successful in our program in Billings and in our mission to place our graduates in Montana – with a focus on rural and underserved practices. Our residents all do rural rotations as part of their curriculum and so you may see them in your community during their training. Congratulation to these graduates and we wish them the best in their new careers.



Congratulations



Mark W. Zilkoski, M.D.
For being chosen as the
MONTANA FAMILY
MEDICINE PHYSICIAN OF
THE YEAR
By the Montana Academy of Family
physicians



Listerud Clinic
301 Knapp St., Wolf Point

(406) 653-2150



Mark Zilkoski, MD – 2007 Montana Family Physician of the Year

In the words of Forest Gump, sometimes life is like a box of chocolates. And sometimes you get one of the good ones without a hole already poked in the bottom of it. Awarding someone like Mark Zilkoski the Montana Family Physician of the Year Award was like one of those good chocolates.

When I contacted Dr. Zilkoski's office to figure out how we could announce the award for him, all I heard from anyone that I talked to was that he was very deserving of this award. The next thing that I heard from all of them was 'How can I help?'.

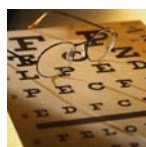
Mark has been working in Wolf Point for many years, serving his community, teaching residents and medical students, and doing all of those other things that you expect of someone who has their name come up in discussions regarding an award like this.

What was interesting for me, not previously knowing Mark, is that none of this was mentioned in discussions that I have had with people working around him. What I did hear discussed were the things that are rarely mentioned, but are often the most important to all of us. Things like compassion, work ethic, dedication, caring, and dependability. Those attributes are the things that make great physicians out of good doctors.

In a state like ours with over 400 Family Physicians, not every excellent physician will get this type of recognition, but I was lucky enough to have the pleasure of giving Dr. Mark Zilkoski the recognition he deserves for his excellent work as a Family Physician here in Montana.

So hats off to Mark Zilkoski MD of Wolf Point, 2007 Montana Family Physician of the Year.

Kirk L. Crews, MD
MAFP, Past President





**2008 MAFP FAMILY PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR
NOMINATION FORM – PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT**

PHYSICIAN'S NAME _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

OFFICE ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

PHONE – HOME _____ OFFICE _____

FAX _____ EMAIL _____

MEDICAL SCHOOL _____

RESIDENCY PROGRAM _____

BOARD CERTIFIED _____ YES _____ NO

MAFP MEMBER _____ YES _____ NO

TOTAL YEARS IN PRACTICE _____

SOLO _____ FP GROUP _____ HMO _____ OTHER _____

NOMINATED BY _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

IN YOUR LETTER, PLEASE DESCRIBE THE PHYSICIAN NOMINEE IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

1. PROVIDES HIS/HER PATIENTS WITH COMPASSIONATE, CARING, AND COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY MEDICINE ON A CONTINUING BASIS



2. DIRECTLY PARTICIPATES IN ACTIVITIES THAT ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF HIS/HER COMMUNITY

3. IS A CREDIBLE ROLE MODEL PROFESSIONALLY AND PERSONALLY TO HIS/HER COMMUNITY, TO OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, RESIDENTS, AND MEDICAL STUDENTS

4. EFFECTIVELY REPRESENT THE SPECIALITY OF FAMILY MEDICINE AND THE MAFP IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

5. OTHER COMMENTS

FULL PACKET MUST BE RECEIVED BY JANUARY 15, 2008

THANK YOU!

Nomination Requirements

1. Completed **Nomination Form**
2. Current **Curriculum Vitae**
3. Current **Head-and-shoulders photo (appropriate for publication)** of candidate

Supporting Documentation

1. **Maximum of 8 pages** – if more than 8 pages of supporting documentation are received, only the first 8 pages will be used. (Please note, supporting documentation does not include the nomination form or the curriculum vitae.)
2. **One side only** of each page (no-double sided pages.)
3. Please do not reduce more than **2 letters to a page**.
4. All pages must be **photocopy-ready and of reproducible quality**. Newspaper articles, odd-sized pieces of paper, etc, must be copied on an unfolded, 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper. Anything that is not photocopy-ready will not be used.
5. The entire packet should be mailed flat with no staples – **do not fold**.

IN WITH THE NEW RESIDENTS AND SPORTS MEDICINE FELLOW FOR 2007 !!!

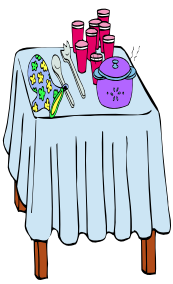
The Montana Family Medicine Residency and Sports Medicine Fellowship welcomes our new intern class, the new member of our second year group and our new Sports Medicine fellow.

Ashley Beller hails from Missoula Montana and graduated this spring from the University of North Dakota School of Medicine, where she developed an interest in rural medicine, participating in the ROME track in Hettinger, ND. Many of us remember Ashley from her rotation here last year and welcome her back to Billings. She is interested in care for the underserved, social justice, wilderness and international medicine and has spent two months this year in clinical rotations in Cameroon, Africa. Her interests include climbing, hiking, fly-fishing, quilting and playing the cello.



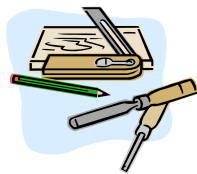
Sarah Borge grew up in Conrad Montana and graduated from the University of Minnesota this spring where she was the recipient of the Gold Humanism Award. During medical school, Sarah took one year off to travel and study in Ecuador and Chile, continuing her global interests that began with international volunteer work in college. She is an avid hiker and backpacker who led wilderness trips for children in summer camp in the Flathead for 5 summers and hiked nearly 200 miles between first and second year of medical school. She is also interested in sports, running, reading and traveling.

Lindsay Carlson is from Federal Way, Washington and graduated from the University of Washington. During medical school, Lindsay did a summer R/UOP project in Anaconda and spent her third year of medical school in the WRITE track in Lewistown. We are happy to help her return once again to Montana. Lindsay has widely traveled, spending 6 months working and teaching in Angola during college and time in South Africa during medical school. Her interests include snowboarding, hiking, rock-climbing and just getting outside.



Margaret Kosnar will join us from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill North Carolina, where she also grew up. After completing her undergraduate degree in public health, Margaret joined the Peace Corps where she worked as a rural community development volunteer in Togo, West Africa. She spent an additional year backpacking around Southern and Northern Africa before helping create a girl's empowerment program in Togo. Margaret has also led a wilderness trail crew in Maine and worked as a wilderness ranger on Mount Hood. During medical school, Margaret was awarded a one-year Doris Duke Clinical Research Fellowship where she studied alternative methods of predicting heart failure exacerbations. Her research interests include heart failure, diabetes, and the intersection of literacy and health outcomes. Outside of medicine, Margaret enjoys travel, backpacking, trail running, pot-luck dinners, spending time with family, and trying to convince her daughter that there are other literary luminaries besides Elmo.

Thea Petersen grew up in Colfax Washington and graduated from the University of Washington. During medical school she was active in intramural sports including volleyball, softball and inner-tube basketball, continuing her love for team sports. She enjoys traveling and studied abroad in Ecuador during college and did a two-month sub internship at a hospital in Tanzania this spring. Her grandfather - also a physician - helped to found this same hospital during his years spent in Tanzania. She also enjoys outdoor activities including camping, hiking and cross country skiing.



Katie Woods is from Bozeman Montana and attended the University of Washington School of Medicine. Prior to medical school, she worked as a ranger in Yellowstone National Park, traveled extensively to places such as Nepal, Morocco, Peru, and Guatemala, and also taught English in Germany for a year. Her goal in Medicine is to care for underserved populations both nationally and internationally. She speaks Spanish, German, and French. She holds a Master's degree in Education from Harvard. She enjoys hiking, running, traveling, skiing, visual arts, wood-working, and spending time with her husband, two-year old son and their new baby.

Stephanie Draper graduated from Oregon Health Sciences University, and will join our program with advanced standing after an internship in psychiatry at Dartmouth. She is originally from western New York but moved to Missoula after graduating from college in Maine with a degree in geology. Once in Montana, she became heavily involved in both environmental conservation and education - working with an Americorps program and guiding teens in the woods of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. After becoming a wilderness EMT in 1999, she began to actively pursue a career in medicine. She has an interest in women's health and preventive medicine, and enjoys telemark skiing, hiking, trail running, and writing in her free time.



Chill Yee, MD has completed a fellowship in Integrative Medicine through the University of Arizona after graduating from the University of Nevada School of Medicine and completing his residency in Family Medicine at University of California, Davis. He has also completed training in Medical Acupuncture at UCLA. Dr Yee has worked for the past two years as a physician and medical director at the Native American Health Center in Sacramento while providing on-going event coverage of UC Davis and Sacramento High School sports. His personal athletic background includes high school and college basketball and football, and he served with the US Marine Corps. Chill has a personal interest in integrating complementary medicine modalities with primary care of the athlete, in patient education, lifestyle education and sports event coverage. He is here with his wife, young daughter and they expect their second child this fall.

Political Action Committee Gives Family Physicians More Powerful Voice

America's health care system is on the cusp of dramatic change, and family medicine is in a prime position to have significant influence on that change. That reality should spur family physicians to invest in advocacy efforts now underway on the state and national levels, say family medicine advocates.

Among the most direct opportunities: supporting the AAFP political action committee, FamMedPAC.

Since its formation in 2005, FamMedPAC has worked to give family medicine a more powerful voice in our nation's capitol. This year, FamMedPAC has helped AAFP promote family medicine as the 110th Congress takes up important healthcare issues such as physician payment reform, Title VII funding for primary care residency programs, and increasing funding for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

"FamMedPAC helped make this happen," says Michael Fleming, MD, chair of the FamMedPAC Board of Directors. "In the last election, the PAC contributed to 87 incumbents or candidate. The PAC also supported several victorious open seat candidates, running for Congress for the first time. That puts the AAFP in a strong advocacy position."

In the last election cycle, the first for FamMedPAC, more than 1,000 AAFP members contributed almost \$400,000 to the PAC. "This is a great success," said Dr. Fleming, "But we can, and need, to do better." So far in 2007, more than 940 AAFP members have contributed over \$230,000 to the PAC.

"Every member of AAFP needs to consider supporting the PAC". "As one of the largest medical societies, AAFP and FamMedPAC have the potential to become one of the most powerful voices in the healthcare debate. As the only political action committee whose sole purpose is promoting the viewpoints of family physicians and family medicine, the PAC will help us elect legislators who support our agenda and help improve healthcare for all Americans."

"I support FamMedPAC, because I am convinced it will help my practice and my patients." *Many of our members are part of the Club George*, made up of AAFP members who agree to contribute \$365 a year – one dollar a day – to the PAC. "It's easy to think of giving just a dollar a day to the PAC. The PAC can even take the contribution directly from my credit card each month, so I hardly think about it."

The PAC is working with the chapters to promote its activities and to raise awareness about the importance of political involvement. The PAC Chapter Champion program hopes to recruit AAFP members in each chapter to promote the PAC at chapter meetings and to act as liaisons between chapter members and the PAC. The PAC Web site (www.fammedpac.org) tracks each chapter's contributions by total and percentage, and tries to foster competition among them to see which chapter can achieve the highest level of support for the PAC.

"Once we get the word out about the importance of the PAC, I am convinced our Chapter will be one of the leaders in this effort." "We may not be the largest Chapter in AAFP, but our members will step up and do the right thing if asked."

The potential strength of FamMedPAC is emphasized by Mark Cribben, FamMedPAC's Director, when he speaks to AAFP members. "If every member of AAFP contributed just \$100 per year to the PAC, we would have over \$8 million to spend on political activities each year. That would make us the largest medical PAC in the country, and allow us to elect more family medicine-friendly candidates to Congress." Cribben adds: "If we reach that level, that's not just a headline in AAFP News Now, that's a headline in the New York Times!"

**You can learn more about FamMedPAC at
www.fammedpac.org, or call Mark Cribben at 1-888-271-5853.**

**Big Mountain Medical
Ski Conference at
Whitefish, MT
Jan. 29 – Feb. 1, 2008**

**58th Annual Meeting of the
Montana Academy of Family
Physicians
Chico Hot Springs, Pray, MT
June 19-21, 2008**

Montana Academy of Family Physicians
2021 11th Avenue, Suite 1
Helena, MT 59601-4890
Phone: 406-443-4000
Fax: 406-443-4042
Web site <http://www.montanaafp.org>



Mission Statement

**As the representative of Family Medicine
and Family Physicians in Montana, the
Montana Academy of Family Physicians:**

Promotes Family Medicine;

**Provides education for Family
Physicians;**

**Represents the personal and professional
interests of Family Physicians, and;**

**Is the guiding force for quality primary
care in Montana**

The 57th Annual Meeting of the Montana Academy of Family Physicians was held this past June at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort. We had a very good turnout for the meeting and there was excellent CME as well as an array of other activities.

This year we were very fortunate to be meeting in conjunction with the program directors from the WWAMI network and several of the directors gave superb talks during the course of the conference. Other presentations were made by a variety of both local and national speakers.

By design, both our summer and winter conferences are structured to allow for plenty of time to enjoy the beautiful Montana surroundings. This year there was the annual Friday afternoon golf tournament of course, but we also had a fly-fishing class as well as a magic show for the kids (both big and little).

The Friday night BBQ was a hit as always and this year featured not only the installation of the new MAFP officers but also the presentation of the Montana Family Physician of the Year Award to Mark Zilkoski, MD from Wolf Point.

Next year the annual summer conference will be held June 19th – 21st at Chico Hot Springs Resort. Preparations are already underway to bring you another excellent conference packed with great CME and opportunities for family fun. Don't hesitate to contact me with your recommendations for topics and speakers.

Tom James, MD

Program Chair tomj@ycchd.org

MAFP Request for Nominations

The Montana Academy of Family Physicians is requesting nominations for the **MONTANA FAMILY PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR**. The purpose is to honor a physician who exemplifies a compassionate commitment to improving the health and well being of people and communities throughout Montana.

The candidate must be a member in good standing of the MAFP and spend at least fifty percent of his or her time in direct patient care. A nominee should exemplify the ideals of family medicine, which include providing comprehensive, compassionate services on a continuing basis to the community and possessing personal qualities that make him or her a role model to professional colleagues.

Any member of the MAFP may submit a nomination. Eligibility will be verified by the board of the MAFP. Qualified nominees may be nominated more than once; however, a member may receive the award only once. Current members of the MAFP board are not eligible for nomination.

The award presentation will be made during the MAFP Awards Banquet held June, 2008 during the summer MAFP annual meeting. The physician chosen as the 2008 MAFP Family Physician of the Year may be selected as Montana's nominee for the 2009 AAFP Family Physician of the Year award.

Please send the nomination form, a current CV, a head/shoulders photo of your nominee, and up to 8 pages of supporting letters/documentation from colleagues or patients to the MAFP office no later than January 15th, 2008. Find a copy of the nomination form and more information about submission requirements at the Montana AFP web site:

<http://www.montanaafp.org>

PREVIOUS HONOREES

2006 + + + John Patterson, MD, Bozeman

2007 + + + Mark Zilkoski, MD, Wolf Point

