

THE INTEGRATOR BLOG

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Pictures at an Exposition: A Report on the 25th Anniversary Convention of the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians

Written by John Weeks

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Presentations from the two of the modern elders, Jared Zeff, ND and Joe Pizzorno, ND



Zeff: Known for nature cure



Pizzorno: Known for science based natural medicine

The bookends to the conference's educational content were keynotes from Jared Zeff, ND, and Joseph Pizzorno, ND. Zeff is closely associated with the historic "nature cure" orientation of the profession. Pizzorno is known for promoting a "science-based natural medicine" approach which has, due to the preponderance of research in natural approaches being in the area of natural products, tended to promote the therapeutic focus on natural pharmacy as a first line of treatment, a direction sometimes derided as "green allopathy."

In Zeff's talk, he presented the naturopathic principles, formally adopted through a 1987-1989 process which he co-led with Pamela Snider, ND. These Zeff linked to a paradigm shift in science and philosophy that he believes is increasingly coming to the fore in conventional medical thought if not yet in practice. He spoke of the *vis medicatrix naturae*, the healing power of nature, a concept he places at the center of naturopathic medicine. Zeff urged his profession to continue working on characterizing the nature of the *vis*, including examining both vitalistic views and materialist explanations of this healing power.

Pizzorno, perhaps the most visible modern leader of the profession, opened with the statement that "the future of naturopathic medicine is naturopathic medicine." He advanced a view that the profession's optimal future is not in taking on a functional medicine model, or or biomedical model or in merely pursuing integration. Rather, Pizzorno urged his profession to go more deeply into its own values and meaning to human health. He noted the expansion of conventional drug treatment in the legal scope for NDs in many states and questioned patterns that he sees emerging. In his view, the NDs may be drifting toward using "higher force" agents prematurely, when agents with fewer adverse effects might be in better accord with the profession's concept of a proper therapeutic order. He underscored that the profession's promise is to "treat people by making them well," arguing that at this point the profession and its practitioners are not engaged at the depths that they need to be in this core purpose.

Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine Project moves forward



Snider: Leading the Foundations process

Since 2005, a quietly growing influence in the profession's development has been the Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine Project (FNM), led by Pamela Snider, ND. Originally a book project with Elsevier, Snider and her senior editor team, which includes both Zeff and Pizzorno, have used the project as a deep exploration of both the roots of this healthcare option and the modern science that supports it. In a collaborative project to capture the profession's history, Snider's team rolled out a time-line on the exhibit hall walls, inviting attendees to add significant dates and actions. Snider, an *Integrator editorial* adviser, explained: "The timeline is built around the concept of professional formation and benchmarks of emerging professions, including regulation, education, accreditation and codification of knowledge." The timeline, to be published as part of the Elsevier text, traces the evolution of these processes plus association development, mainstream integration and collaboration, and public policy involvement.

The Foundations project also convened a senior editors' retreat at the conference, involving international leaders from Canada (Don Warren, ND, DHANP), England (Roger Newman Turner, ND, DO), Australia (Stephen Myers, PhD, BMed, ND) and the United States (Snider, Zeff, Pizzorno and AANP founder James Sensenig, ND). An e-exchange on the value of their meeting provoked these reflections:

- *Myers*: "We had an intense discussion on the interpretation and articulation of the fundamentals of naturopathic medicine that reached an international consensus. In reflection you realize that history is made in such moments."
- *Sensenig*: "This international editors panel reaffirmed classical principles that have been observed over many millennia and guide the healing art."
- *Newman-Turner*: "Thanks to the technology of webcam, I was pleased to be able to participate fully in the meeting of the Senior Editors in Portland at which we were able to reach some important policy decisions regarding the style and language of the Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine textbook - decisions that will enhance the clarity and wisdom of naturopathic medicine for the future."
- *Warren*: "It was an awesome experience sitting around a table with individuals who have taken many leadership roles in the profession with close to 200 combined years of naturopathic medical experience. The significant outcomes of such a meeting and lively interchange will ripple on for years to come."
- *Zeff*: "To sit around a table with Roger Newman Turner, Stephen Myers, Don Warren, Joe Pizzorno, Jim Sensenig, Pam Snider, and Erica Kubanek [a student support person], and talk about naturopathic philosophy, its finer points and their best articulation, was perhaps the high point of my year."

- *Pizzorno*: "This textbook promises to be the most important book about health and healing written in the last 100 years."

Snider shares that the book is due for 2011 submission to Elsevier with then 6-9 months before publication in 2012. The long gestation period, says Snider, is by design. The textbook was to be written via a series of retreats and symposia. (See *Integrator* article on one symposium here.) The Portland retreat was the second. "The roll out of the book," Snider adds, "will include an international symposium and call for abstracts from the profession. This will include thought leaders from other health care, environmental and scientific disciplines to critique, hone and refine naturopathic medical thinking."

Comment: Snider shares that "what's unique is the profession is not just writing a book, but is examining key issues in its development." The forecast from Pizzorno, a former member of the White House Commission on CAM Policy, member of his local Board of Health for his county, past president of the Institute for Functional Medicine, is jaw-dropping. *Might a growing mass of now 4000 physicians, committed to whole person treatment and a holistic philosophy, working together to renew/recreate healthcare, produce such a volume?* Get the book out so we can all participate in the dialogue and see the outcomes of this labor!