

## Giants in Chest Medicine

### John (Jack) G. Weg, MD, Master FCCP

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VIDEO 

**Editor's Note:** This series recognizes and highlights the accomplishments of individuals who have contributed greatly to chest medicine. To watch the interview with Dr Weg, go to [journal.publications.chestnet.org](http://journal.publications.chestnet.org)

As a mentee and colleague of John (Jack) G. Weg, MD, Master FCCP, it is with great sadness and a sense of loss, yet pride, that I write this editorial. Dr Weg died on May 3, 2015, at the age of 81, surrounded by his loving wife, Mary, and family.

While serving in the US Air Force (USAF) and stationed at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, Jack Weg was undecided about his future in medicine. Considering at first training in GI, cardiology, or oncology, his path into pulmonary medicine began with a push from his mentor, Lt Col Robert B. Stonehill, USAF, MC, FCCP, a pulmonologist and chair of medicine who informed him, "If you want to stay at Wilford Hall, you are going to go into pulmonary." And that he did. Dr Weg's experiences at Wilford Hall, and conversations with trainees throughout the years, confirmed his belief that "people [role models] influence the career you follow." So began his "giant" career in pulmonary medicine.

Being the first in his immediate family to go to college, Dr Weg continued advancing his education and received

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**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** See video interview of Dr Weg online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1378/chest.15-1474>.

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John (Jack) G. Weg, MD, Master FCCP

his MD from New York Medical College, completing his medical training at Walter Reed General Hospital and Wilford Hall USAF Hospital. After his pulmonary training, he became Chief of the Pulmonary Section and then Chief, Pulmonary and Infectious Disease Services, at Wilford Hall. From there, he spent the next 4 years in Houston teaching at Baylor College of Medicine and serving as Clinical Director of the Pulmonary Disease Division at Jefferson Davis Hospital. He and his staff were responsible for revitalizing the Jefferson Davis facility in Houston, working with a large TB ward and introducing clinical pulmonary medicine into the facility. In September 1971, Dr Weg began his distinguished career of > 40 years at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where he served as Chief of the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine from 1974 to

1985 and Professor Emeritus of Internal Medicine in the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine from 2001 until his death. Among his many honors and awards is a gift from his former fellows—the naming of the John G. Weg, MD, Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine Library at the University of Michigan. Dr Weg's leadership and involvement with an extraordinary number of committees and volunteer organizations, along with his exhaustive bibliography, attest to his enthusiasm and dedication to education and training in pulmonary and critical care medicine and advancing the field of medicine. At a time when there was very little training in how to do it, he advised physicians to learn how to do research and seek out lectures or courses on the subject, such as those he established at Michigan.

Dr Weg stands as an important part of establishing the foundation of modern clinical pulmonary and critical care medicine. Among his many contributions are (1) being among the first to pioneer the introduction of respiratory ICUs and acute medical beds devoted to respiratory patients; (2) being at the vanguard of the movement to treat patients with TB with pills as outpatients instead of treating them as inpatients in sanatoriums; (3) establishing the importance of mechanically ventilating patients with known volumes instead of guessing at how much volume to give the patient based on pressure measurements alone; (4) recognizing the importance of oxygen delivery in ARDS; (5) being at the vanguard of the movement believing in the importance of end-of-life issues and how to address them; and (6) helping to establish, as one of the principle investigators of the Prospective Investigation of Pulmonary Embolism Diagnosis (PIOPED) study group, the importance of incorporating clinical probability with diagnostic testing in predicting the likelihood of VTE disease and showing the limitations of ventilation/perfusion lung scanning.

In his video interview, Dr Weg cited his contributions to education as being among his greatest accomplishments and cited as his most important contribution to and accomplishment in education his involvement with the introduction of the American College of Chest Physicians Self-Education and Evaluation of Knowledge (ACCP-SEEK) Program. This program was one of the first self-study book series used for preparation for American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) certification examinations in pulmonary and critical care medicine. He not only conceived of the ACCP-SEEK idea but also developed and implemented the program. The very successful book series was and still consists of an ABIM-type practice

examination with multiple choice questions followed by a scholarly discussion that identifies the correct answer and why it is correct as well as the incorrect answers and why they are incorrect. His involvement with the American College of Chest Physicians spanned almost 40 years and included a term as President, being honored as a Master Fellow, serving as chair of numerous committees and courses, and being a long-time member of the CHEST Editorial Board. He prided himself on encouraging young physicians to get involved in the leadership of the organization and working with the College through the years to continually enhance the quality of the education the organization provides for physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals.

As one of the original members of the ACCP-SEEK Writing Committee led by Dr Weg, I was a recipient of his passion in teaching others about clinical pulmonary and critical care medicine, how to critically evaluate the literature, and how to write. I learned a lot from him, and for that, I am and will be eternally grateful to him. We were fortunate in being able to videotape Dr Weg before his passing, and I encourage all to view the interview to hear his words of wisdom.

## Suggested Readings

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