

PHS OFFICERS GUIDE

- Where Are they?

We have been getting lots of questions about when the ***PHS Officers Guide*** will be distributed to active duty officers. Good question. We have 10,000 copies sitting in the COA/COF office and the floor is beginning to sag.

Many members are aware that the copyright for this wonderful book was given to the Foundation by authors retired Captain Jim Knoblen and Commander Alice Knoblen. The Knoblen's gift of the copyright was conditioned on the Foundation's agreement to print and distribute, free of charge, a copy of the ***Guide*** to every officer on active duty in the Commissioned Corps. The Foundation readily and enthusiastically agreed and printed 10,000 copies. Those of you at the annual conference in Denver earlier this year were on hand when Foundation Trustee RADM Mary Pat Couig, USPHS (Ret.) announced the donation and gave the first two copies to Assistant Secretary Admiral John Agwunobi and Surgeon General Vice Admiral Richard Carmona.

Consultation with the Office of the Surgeon General revealed that a donation to each active duty officer amounted to a gift to the Department and that only the Secretary of DHHS had the authority to approve and accept such a gift. Accordingly, the Foundation wrote a letter to the Secretary in April extending the offer. The plan was for the Foundation to deliver 6,000 copies of the Guide to OSG for further delivery to each officer as the Foundation does not have access to addresses for every officer.

We continue to wait for the Secretary to respond to our offer. In the meantime, officers who have an urgent need for the book may contact COF at 301.731.9080 and request a copy. You have to pay the mailing cost and as long as we do not get overwhelmed with requests we should be able to get you a copy in a timely manner.

We do not know why it is taking the Secretary so long to accept a freebie. There are likely lots of bureaucrats along the way who have to say yes and we keep checking to make sure the offer has not been "lost." Stay tuned.