

A Tribute to Francis A. Neelon, MD

In this issue of the *North Carolina Medical Journal*, it is with regret and a feeling of deep appreciation that we announce the retirement of Francis A. Neelon, MD, as Editor, a position he has held since January 1992, when he replaced Eugene A. Stead, Jr., MD, who himself had served as Editor since 1983 with Dr. Neelon as Associate Editor. Together, these two outstanding physicians have kept the *Journal* in operation for two decades.

One of the most remarkable things about Dr. Neelon has been his unwavering support for the idea of maintaining a periodic medium of communication among the health professionals (especially physicians) of this state. So strong has been his commitment to this concept that he took on the huge task of raising private financing for this effort for two years of his tenure as Editor, even after the House of Delegates and Executive Committee of the North Carolina Medical Society made the decision that the Society could no longer finance the publication of the *Journal*. Not only did Dr. Neelon raise the necessary funds to assure the *Journal's* publication for two additional years, but he invested, on multiple occasions, his own personal funds in this cause.

Frank Neelon is clearly one of the most highly regarded physicians in this state. An outstanding general internist and endocrinologist, he is a "doctor's doctor" in the finest sense of the term. Moreover, he took such great interest in assuring to every prospective author the opportunity to communicate through the pages of the *Journal* with his or her colleagues that he devoted countless hours in working individually with authors on the readability and the communicative impact of their contributions. Several, well-published authors have made reference to the fact that they received their very best and most thorough commentaries and editorial suggestions from Dr. Neelon during his term as Editor of the *Journal*.

Though we will miss our periodic opportunities for exchange of ideas with Frank Neelon, and all our future contributors will miss the benefits of his editorial hand, it is with pleasure that we recognize his tremendous contributions to the life and health of the *North Carolina Medical Journal* by having him join Dr. Stead on our masthead as Editor Emeritus. By this action of the Editorial Board, we hope to signal our deep appreciation for all his many efforts as Editor and at the same time to continue our long-term association with the person without whose efforts the *Journal* would never have survived.