

Richard M. Sax

April 17, 2023

Editor's Note: No Obituary has been published for Richard Sax. I have copied his thoughtful note in our 50th Reunion Book that classmates might have a deeper understanding of him. HBM



Running has become a metaphor for my life since graduating from Dartmouth. I began this activity during my neurology residency as a way to “walk the dog”, but quickly found that it gave me an opportunity to think through issues without interruption. Frank Shorter’s success in the 1972 Olympic marathon event challenged me to up my mileage, and I began running 10K’s and ultimately marathons with some measure of success. I never “gave up my day job,” but I’ve continued all these years to participate in long distance events with a large measure of satisfaction.

Approaching life is much like preparing for a marathon. One lays out a comprehensive plan and then begins to execute it in an incremental fashion. Gradually increasing daily mileage until achieving a target distance. The day of a race is filled with ritual activity; then actually setting targets along the way until arriving at the finish line feeling that you have accomplished a great

deal and gaining a large measure of self-satisfaction.

Life in general is just that--setting goals and then designing a game plan to reach those objectives. Medical school was a real challenge and left a few bruises but nonetheless was fulfilling. Neurology residency enabled me to concentrate on an area of medicine that I found intriguing. There I came under the guidance of several outstanding mentors who were fine teachers and educators and further stimulated by curiosity.

After almost 25 years in private practice, I earned a master’s degree in health administration and developed a keen interest in healthcare management through a series of jobs both in private and recently in the public sector. I am now a medical director for the county healthcare agency, MSI program providing quality and affordable healthcare to a highly vulnerable population who had previously lacked access to primary and preventative care. Our program is a

combined federal and local demonstration project which is serving as a prototype to that which will be enacted in President Obama's healthcare plan by 2014. The assigning patient centered medical homes to all our clients has facilitated continuity of care, significantly reduced ER visits, and improved overall health status.

So, I will continue to run, work in the forefront of healthcare reform and enjoy the stimulation and excitement that these endeavors provide. I hope that my fellow classmates share the same vision and have had an equal amount of enjoyment in their careers.