

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PERIPHERAL NERVE

Newsletter



Spring 2005

President's Message

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It is a very great pleasure to invite you to the upcoming 15th Annual Meeting of the American Society For Peripheral Nerve, which will be held in Tucson, Arizona on January 14-15, 2006. In keeping with the tradition of the past few years, our meeting format will combine a few sessions with the ASRM meeting, including instructional courses, panels, and an outstanding nerve paper session. The program chair, Ivan Ducic, M.D., from Georgetown University, is coordinating an outstanding program, including new techniques in peripheral nerve surgery, as well as a panel on the current management of complex peripheral nerve disorders. We have invited Ayan Gulgonen, M.D., from Istanbul, Turkey, who has unprecedented experience in treating thousands of traumatic peripheral nerve injuries. He will share some of his experiences with us during this meeting. We would like to balance this clinical program with a basic science lecture given by the Chairman of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation's Department of Neurosciences, Bruce Trapp, Ph.D., who will share his insights regarding cellular and molecular

mechanisms of myelination, demyelination, and dysmyelination.

I would like to share with you the news that we are very close to opening our website, which will make future information about the growth of the ASPAN available on a daily basis. We hope this website will serve as the exchange of information between our well-established international membership. The place of the meeting is in Tucson, Arizona in a wonderfully located resort and should provide an enjoyable break from the winter season.

I am encouraging you all to come and join us in Tucson, Arizona for the 15th anniversary meeting of the American Society for Peripheral Nerve. We will have a lot of scientific discussions, exciting social events, and as usual, the opportunity to renew old friendships and build new ones. I hope to see you all there.

Maria Siemionow, M.D., Ph.D., D.Sc.
President

From The Editor's Desk

Welcome to the spring edition of the ASPAN newsletter. In this issue the number of pages has been increased to 6 to accommodate the increased material submitted for the newsletter. We have added a new feature: "Point of view" to create a forum for the members to express their point of view regarding different issues pertinent to our society. Our society is growing in number and in strength and our newsletter should reflect that growth. It should also reflect the multiple different aspects of peripheral nerve surgery and research.

I would ask the members for their feedback regarding what they would like to see in their newsletter and to also comment on how to make it better and more useful to the members.

I would like to thank my co editors Chris Novak, PT/MS and Ivica Ducic, M.D. Ph.D. and to offer a special thank you to Krista Greco from the central office for her help and dedication.

Nash Naam, M.D., Editor
drnaam@handdocs.com

Future Meeting Update – January 2006, Tucson, Arizona

I am pleased to be able to extend a warm invitation to the members of the ASPAN and their guests to join us at the Loews Ventana Canyon Resort in Tucson for the 15th Annual Meeting of the Society. We are planning a lively and stimulating program, which will offer an opportunity for scientists and clinicians to meet and exchange their ideas. The

meeting will be held on Saturday and Sunday, January 14th and 15th, 2006. Saturday morning will feature a combined program with the American Association for Hand Surgery and the American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery. Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday will be devoted to our own sessions. Instructional courses will be available early each morning.

Members and guests are encouraged to submit abstracts on projects in progress. This allows us to enjoy the most

current program material and to discuss and direct ideas from an early stage. Abstract submission will be accomplished on line at

http://aahs.asrm.aspn.confex.com/oasys_new/2006/index.epi and must be completed by June 1, 2005. The senior authors are strongly encouraged not only to pay the attention to the quality of the presentations, but also to obey the allowed time for presentations and to use the appropriate number of Power Point slides, thus avoiding bullet presentations. This is the conclusion from the 2005 ASPN business meeting where all present members agreed that the originality of the work and good discussion are far more important than 7-minute 50-slide bullet presentation whose content nobody could follow or understand. We thank you for following these instructions when preparing 2006 ASPN abstract presentation.



The Loews Ventana Canyon Resort (<http://www.loewshotels.com/hotels/tucson/default.asp>), where 2006 ASPN meeting will take place offers Tucson's best for both business and family activities. This five-star resort is nestled at the base of the Santa Catalina Mountains in Northeast Tucson, and is one of the area's newest resorts. Built in 1984 and renovated in 1998, it features two 18 hole PGA championship golf courses, a full-service spa and tennis. Minutes from beautiful Sabino Canyon, it offers spectacular

city and mountain views. It has been named one of the best resort hotels in the US by *Travel & Leisure* magazine.

Tucson, twelve thousand years ago, was a Native American village by the name of "stukshon." Loosely translated, it means, "springs from the foot of the black hill." And that is exactly what Tucson does. Situated along the banks of the Santa Cruz River and bordered by both the Sonoran Desert and the Catalina Mountains, much of Tucson's allure is in its ancient land, heritage and spirituality. A number of quality attractions are available while visiting (http://www.loewshotels.com/hotels/tucson/guide_attractions.asp, http://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g60950-Activities-Tucson_Arizona.html) the resort, including tennis, spa activities, horseback riding, mountain biking, swimming and hiking. The city of Tucson offers activities close by including numerous well known golf courses (La Paloma, The Gallery, Tucson Omni), shopping (La Encantata), Hiking (Sabino Canyon etc), the Desert Sonora Museum, Old Tucson, The Tucson Botanical Gardens and even snow skiing on Mount Lemmon (weather permitting).

The weather in Tucson is typically sunny but in the winter there can be significant fluctuations. The average high of 68°F with average lows of 33°F should be taken into consideration when packing. Also Tucson receives an average of 0.84 inches of rain in January. Activities close by include day trips to Mexico, Scottsdale, Tubac, Tombstone, or Bisbee. Thus, renting a car would be highly encouraged to get to the resort (situated 19 miles from the Tucson International Airport) and explore the surrounding areas

Ivica Ducic, M.D., Ph.D.
Chairman of the Program Committee

Program Committee Report January 2005

It was a great pleasure to serve as Program Chairman for the meeting of the American Society for Peripheral Nerve held in Puerto Rico in January, 2005. The essential nature of the program design remained unchanged from previous years. We share a morning with the American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery and the American Association of Hand Surgery. One and a half days exclusively devoted to the American Society for Peripheral Nerve followed on Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday.

This year 79 abstracts were submitted for consideration by the Scientific Program Committee. Of these abstracts 52 were selected for a final podium presentation including two papers for the outstanding nerve paper session at the combined meeting and the remainder for the plenary sessions of the American Society for Peripheral Nerve. I would like to thank all of the members of the program committee who rated the submitted abstracts for consideration. Those committee members were:

Ivan Ducic Jose Monsivais
Greg Evans Nash Naam

Peter Evans David Netscher
James Kerns Robert Spinner
Martijn Malessy Melanie Urbanchek
Nancy McKee David Weinstein

In addition, we provided five courses at the combined instructional course morning on Saturday and four courses for our own instructional morning on Sunday. I was very pleased to be able to invite two research scientists from the University of Toronto to present our invited lectures. Professor Milton Charlton and Professor Mike Salter kindly agreed to address our Society.

My greatest debt of thanks must go to Krista Greco and the staff in the Central Office who made this process both easy and fun.

**Howard M. Clarke, M.D., Ph.D., F.R.C.S.(C),
F.A.A.P., F.A.C.S. Professor,
Department of Plastic Surgery
University of Toronto**



Drs. Brandt and McCabe



Drs. Clarke and McCabe



Drs. Siemionow and McCabe



Drs. Siemionow and McCabe

ASPEN responding to members' suggestions

In 2004 the Education Committee, chaired by Dr. Karen Joughin, decided to survey ASPEN members to gain some understanding of the needs and desires of the society, with respect to educational support. With Krista Greco's capable assistance, survey questions were developed and distributed to members. The primary question was "What type of educational support (activities or other support) would you like to see ASPEN provide for its members?". Information about journal subscriptions, attendance at ASPEN meetings and years of completion of training/education was also collected.

The response rate was 65/195 members (33%). Responses were categorized and details were collated. A summary of the categories of responses received is provided in the table below. Members generally indicated that they like the current offering of annual meetings and newsletters (current research, letters & comments from members). Other comments included "provide value for membership" and "input on meeting program characteristics such as # speakers, panel, etc.".

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SURVEY RESPONSES	# / 65
<i>Meeting – related</i>	
workshops, courses, symposia on specific topics	11
more panel discussions / discussion in general	3
affiliation with ASSH or other compatible specialties for meetings/symposia	2
increase in # attending and lectures from basic scientists	2
while increasing panel & discussions, decreasing 6 min. presentations and eliminating posters at meeting	1
regional "mini" symposia	1
teleconferences	1
<i>Resources</i>	
newsletter / letters from members	general
library or web material regarding techniques (videos, cd, dvd, web-based)	5
consensus reports / summary of recent research / highlights of literature	4
educational material & modules for residents and students	2
lists of books, journals, audiovisual material, other communications available	1

website with links to peripheral nerve web sites / related meetings	1
email discussion board (case discussion, ideas & innovations, etc.)	1
having own ASPEN journal with member contributions	1
<i>Research</i>	
research funding	6
network for grant review & collaboration	1
<i>Topics (meeting /resources)</i>	
basic neurophysiology, etc. ... statistics / how to write manuscripts & abstracts / how to present a paper	

Based on the results of the survey, the Education Committee made the following recommendations:

- Scientific program and education committees collaborate in reviewing feedback from annual meetings and developing meeting programs
 - one member of the education committee belong to the scientific program committee
 - maximize the educational value of sessions at the annual meetings, using education principles
- Explore the feasibility of creating and maintaining a web site, which could provide most of the *Resources* suggested, and which might permit members to continue to add to the resources
 - surgical or laboratory techniques (web-based material and access to a cd/dvd library)
 - consensus reports / summary of recent research / highlights of literature
 - educational material & modules for residents and students
 - discussion groups
 - lists of published resources and links to on-line materials
 - links to other peripheral nerve web sites and related meetings
- Discuss the feasibility of establishing an ASPEN Research Grant
- Repeat the member survey every 3 years (feedback and suggestions to improve the educational support provided by ASPEN).

The survey and recommendations were presented to the Council at the January, 2005 meeting. Action has been taken

on all of the recommendations. Dr. Robert Spinner, a member of the Education Committee, has been placed on the Program Committee, and there will be more interaction between the two committees. Dr. Paul Cederna will chair an ad hoc Web Site Committee to investigate the cost of developing a web site. The feasibility of establishing an ASPN Research Grant will be explored, and feedback from members regarding their needs and suggestions will be obtained every 3 years.

Hopefully members will continue to contribute their suggestions to the society, through these formal and informal

mechanisms. In this way our society will provide to us what we hope to get it, appropriately responding to the changing needs and desires of its members!

K. Joughin, M.D.
Chair, Education Committee

Point Of View

Peripheral Nerve Fellowship

When the American Society for Peripheral Nerve began, we never addressed the question, “How should a Peripheral Nerve Surgeon be trained?” or the companion question, “Who should train a Peripheral Nerve Surgeon?” In Baltimore, we are now completing an experience with our second Peripheral Nerve Fellow. Ivan Ducic, MD, PhD, our first Peripheral Nerve Fellow, did this year of fellowship training after completing a Plastic Surgery residency and a PhD in Neuroscience. Gedge D. Rosson, MD, our second Peripheral Nerve Fellow, completed a Plastic Surgery Residency prior to beginning this Fellowship year. Ivan is on the full-time faculty at Georgetown, and Gedge will be on the full-time faculty at Johns Hopkins. I am seeking someone to be my third Peripheral Nerve Fellow, to begin in July of 2006.

As with Hand Surgery Fellowships, and indeed some Plastic Surgery Residencies, a single program may need to send its Fellow for training in one or more particular techniques during the regular period of training: Hand

Surgery programs that are too heavily trauma-weighted must send Fellows somewhere else to get experience with congenital hand problems, and Plastic Surgery programs regularly get additional cleft lip/palate training on overseas “missions”. For my own Fellow’s peripheral nerve experience, getting exposure in obstetrical palsy, innervated free muscle transfers for facial palsy, and some nerve transfers would seem to be necessary to have a complete Peripheral Nerve Fellowship. No one applied for my Peripheral Nerve Fellowship for July of 2005, but then, I did not advertise for a Fellow. Should I? Where would I advertise?

Is it time for the leadership of ASPN to think about defining what is appropriate training for peripheral nerve surgery, and whether some type of rotating relationship among peripheral nerve centers would be appropriate for these future Peripheral Nerve Fellows?

A. Lee Dellon

ASPN CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

DEADLINE June 1, 2005

THE ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR THE
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PERIPHERAL NERVE IS
JUNE 1, 2005. PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD AND ENCOURAGE
YOUR COLLEAGUES TO SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO: http://aahs_asrm_aspn.confex.com/oasys_new/2006

Summary of the 10th International Symposium on Neural Regeneration, Part II

By Julia Terzis, M.D., Ph.D.

Dr. Michael G. Fehlings was the next featured speaker by the University of Toronto, Canada and he spoke on “Neuroprotection of the Injured Spinal Cord: From Bench to Clinical Applications”.

The featured talk by Michael Fehlings began by reviewing the pathophysiology of acute spinal cord injury, including the initial mechanical insult which is usually due to a fracture-

dislocation of the spine. This initial or primary injury is followed by a series of secondary injury processes, which include instability and mechanical compression, ischemia, derangements of ionic homeostasis, glutamatergic excitotoxicity, free radical mediated cell death, inflammation and apoptosis (Sekhon and Fehlings, 2001; Park et al., 2003). Dr. Fehlings reviewed the clinical trials with methylprednisolone and GM-1 ganglioside that have shown the potential for neuroprotection in acute spinal cord injury; however, these therapies are associated with only modest clinical benefit. Thus, more effective therapeutic approaches to target the acute injury are required. Accordingly, Dr.

Fehlings critically evaluated new promising neuroprotective approaches and discussed efforts to examine the role and timing of acute surgical decompression (STASCIS trial) (Fehlings et al., 2001). The talk ended with the take-home-message that a key aspect of promoting successful repair and regeneration of the injured spinal cord is the reduction of the impact of the acute injury (Sekhon and Fehlings, 2001; Park et al., 2003). Fehlings MG, Sekhon LH, Tator C (2001) The role and timing of decompression in acute spinal cord injury: What do we know? What should we do? Spine 26:S101-110. Park E, Lou Y, Fehlings MG (2003) Changes in glial cell white matter AMPA receptor expression after spinal cord injury and relationship to apoptotic cell death. Exp Neurol 182:35-48. Sekhon LH, Fehlings MG (2001) Epidemiology, demographics, and pathophysiology of acute spinal cord injury. Spine 26:S2-S12.

The next featured speaker was Dr. Stephen M. Strittmatter from Yale University, New Haven, Ct and he spoke on: "The Role of Nogo and Nogo Receptor in Axonal Regeneration".

Axonal regeneration after traumatic spinal cord injury is minimal. In part, this may be due to myelin-derived inhibitors such as Nogo. Dr. Strittmatter's laboratory has shown that a NEP1-40 peptide blocker of Nogo action at the Nogo-66 receptor (NgR) increases corticospinal (CST) and raphespinal axonal sprouting and functional recovery after spinal cord injury (SCI). This peptide is also effective when delivered systemically up to a week after injury. Similarly, genetic ablation of Nogo-A expression yielded a degree of CST axonal regeneration and functional improvement after SCI. However, the NgR is also a receptor for MAG and OMgp. To block all NGR function, they delivered the extra cellular domain of the receptor to mice with SCI by transgenic means and to rats with SCI intrathecally. The degree of fiber

sprouting was moderately greater than with the selective NEP1-40 blockade. Overall, several lines of evidence demonstrate a role for NgR in limiting axonal sprouting after SCI,

Biological and Translational Potential of Olfactory Ensheathing Glial Cells (Chaired by Dr. Almudena Ramon-Cueto, Spanish Council for Scientific Research, Valencia, Spain)

Dr. Jeffery Kocsis (Yale University, New Haven and VA Medical Center, West Haven, CT) presented "Bone marrow stromal cells (MSCs) as a potential source for neural repair". Dr. Susan Barnett (University of Glasgow, Scotland) presented "The pros and cons of olfactory ensheathing cells (OECs) in CNS repair". Dr. Jane Roskams (University of British Columbia, Canada) presented "Lamina propria-derived olfactory ensheathing cells in spinal cord regeneration". Dr. Martin Oudega (University of Miami, FL) presented "Schwann cells and olfactory ensheathing glia for repair of the injured spinal cord".

Visceral Function and Pain in SCI (Chaired by Dr. Alexander Rabschevsky, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky)

Dr. Lynne Weaver (John P. Robarts Research Institute, Ontario, Canada) presented "An early anti-inflammatory strategy markedly reduces autonomic dysreflexia and chronic pain after clip-compression spinal cord injury in rats". Dr. Matt Ramer (University of British Columbia, Canada) presented "Intraspinal sprouting and neuropathic pain following dorsal rhizotomy". Dr. George Smith (University of Kentucky) presented "Growth and guidance factors modulating nociceptive afferent sprouting within the adult spinal cord". Dr. Vivan Mushahwar (University of Alberta, Canada) presented "Novel electrical stimulation techniques for restoring limb function".

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Recruit a Member

Do you know anybody who wants to join a growing society and contribute to the clinical and research development in the area of peripheral nerve surgery? Recruit and sponsor an associate to become a member of the American Society for Peripheral Nerve. You may obtain applications by contacting the Central Office at 312-263-7150 or greco@isms.org. **Applications are due October 1, 2005**