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HAIR TRANSPLANT *forum* INTERNATIONAL

The 6th Annual Meeting of the ISHRS Washington, DC September 16-20, 1998

James Arnold, MD, Reporter-at-Large

The attendees of the 6th Annual Scientific Meeting of the ISHRS discovered a greater emphasis placed on scientific information at this year's conference. Results from comparative studies in surgical techniques were of special interest. The increased emphasis on medical treatment for hair loss was also evident. "There were more facts and less opinions" in this program organized by Paul Cotterill, MD. Walter Unger, MD, stated, "I am impressed with so many scientific papers coming to the floor compared with previous meetings."

The state-of-the-art and evolving trends in hair transplantation were

addressed by Russell Knudsen, MBBS, Richard Shiell, MBBS, and others. The Internet has given an abundance of information to patients, resulting in more educated and sophisticated patients. Propecia® is having an impact on hair restoration and can be viewed as a valuable ally. Incorporating the benefits of Propecia® "encourages a holistic approach to hair loss," Dr. Knudsen emphasized. Selecting medical treatment when indicated, surgery when indicated, or a combined treatment, provides much greater choice for both the surgeon and the patient. The field of hair replacement has forever changed with the advent of potent medical therapy. The specialists of the future will need to be aware of the latest medical treatment as well as the latest surgical treatment for hair loss.

Angela M. Christiano, PhD, was invited to give a special lecture on the genetics of inherited alopecias. Dr. Christiano, a molecular biologist, is known for her original work discovering the genetic aspects of congenital atricha. Dr. Christiano personally experienced a severe episode of alopecia areata with the associated psychological "madness of hair loss," which turned her focus of research toward alopecia. Genetic aberrations on chromosome 8, the same gene which is altered in "hairless mice," is the site for several congenital forms of "hairless people." While Dr.

Christiano's work is not directed at androgenetic hair loss, it is quite evident that greater clarity in the relationship of hair loss and genetics is fast approaching.

Bobby Limmer, MD, gave an excellent discussion on factors influencing the final appearance of density following hair transplantation. Dr. Limmer acknowledged there are many ways to give density, i.e., flaps, large grafts, small grafts, etc. However, the use of follicular units best mimics both "naturalness and density." Using slides provided by Manny Marritt, MD, (somehow a lit-

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Angela M. Christiano, PhD, Herbert Irving Assistant Professor of Dermatology, Columbia University, New York, served as a guest speaker at the meeting.

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President's message

A Presidential View of the Workings of Your Organization

By Sheldon Kabaker, MD, Oakland, California, USA



During the past year as Vice-President of the ISHRS, I came to realize that office in this organization is not just an honor given for past educational endeavors, but is an office involving intense administrative and political activity. My predecessor, Russell Knudsen, set a standard for commitment, untiring enthusiasm, energy, and a stage presence that will remain unmatched for at least the next year. The Presidency involves intense interaction with the Executive Director, the meeting planners, the program chairmen, corporate sponsors, and corresponding members. My background as a private practitioner, occasional author, and lecturer is unrelated to the tasks of running an organization. However, you have my commitment that I will give every effort to fulfill the duties of President and rely heavily on the counsel of the Board of Governors and the past presidents.

The ISHRS, as I see it, has an uncomplicated agenda. This agenda consists of 1) holding an excellent annual meeting, 2) publishing the *Hair Transplant Forum International*, and 3) having an effective web site. Our next meeting will be in the capable hands of Dr. Jim Arnold (roving reporter), who will be the Program Chairman. Under his guidance I expect some innovative concepts at the next meeting. Our web site, which seems to be buried somewhere in cyberspace, will be revised, updated, and made useful to the members and consumers under the guidance of Tony Mangubat and his Web Site Committee.

Your officers, Board of Governors, and your new Executive Director Victoria Przybyszski (soon to become Victoria

Ceh, pronounced "say", which will make her much easier to acknowledge), will be working throughout the year to make the 7th annual meeting, October 20-24 in San Francisco, the best it can be. We need you, the membership, to attend, encourage colleagues and assistants to attend, and submit abstracts of papers for presentation. It should be known that we have 5 available research grants and we encourage those of you who are doing clinical research to apply for these grants. Last year only 2 of the 5 grants were given out due to lack of applicants.

I see hair restoration surgery evolving as a specialty of its own with formal recognition by local, state, and national medical societies and medical schools. Over the years, I have seen what seems like a simple concept and simple procedure involve more and more knowledge, experience, and expertise to produce results that are state-of-the-art and competitive. The distant future may see courses in hair and hair restoration taught in medical schools with formal residency or post-residency fellowships. In the meantime, ISHRS is the home for those of us who work in the field and require the ongoing educational activi-

ties our society offers. At present our annual meeting ties in very well with regional, national, and international hair restoration societies, as work and studies presented at smaller meetings and workshops are being refined and results presented at our meeting. It is fascinating to watch how controversies seem to be solved by scientific and clinical studies, only to see them presented and challenged by an equally good study of an opposing viewpoint. The controversies that are presented to our society are fascinating and show the thoughtfulness, concern, brilliance, and passion many of our members bring to the podium. These same qualities are found in presentations to the *Hair Transplant Forum International*, which communicates material to you on an average of 2 years before you would see it in a peer review journal. Your new co-editors, Russell Knudsen and Dow Stough, will carry the *Hair Transplant Forum International* on in the grand tradition established by Drs. O'Tar Norwood and Richard Shiell.

With all this going for us and the experience and counsel of your officers and past presidents, I may yet have an easy time of it this year.

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President: Sheldon Kabaker, MD

Executive Director: Victoria Przybyszski

Editor: Richard C. Shiell, MBBS

Production: Linda Campbell

Advertising Sales: Gordon L. Deal 843/681-7825

Gordondl@aol.com

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Editor's notes

By Richard Shiell, MBBS, Melbourne, Australia



This will be my last contribution as Editor of *Hair Transplant Forum International*. The past 3 three years have gone in a

flash, and now I am preparing to hand over the editorial reins to two men, Dowling Stough and Russell Knudsen, who have been my friends and colleagues for many years. Both are founding members and Past Presidents of the ISHRS and both are dedicated to the science and art of hair restoration surgery. *Forum* will be in very good hands indeed.

I view with pride the 18 editions of *Forum* which have passed through my hands. I inherited a thriving 5-year-old youngster, which had averaged 24 pages per edition in 1995 and I pass it on as a mature publication which averaged 32 pages in 1998. Paid advertising has increased from 4 pages per edition in 1995 to 8 pages in 1998.

The increasing number of contributions to *Forum* has meant an increasing workload to the Editor and as this is an honorary position, it was believed by the

ISHRS Board that it was unfair to expect the load to be shouldered by one individual in future. I agree with this thinking, and although it has been my pleasure and privilege to perform these duties over the past 3 years I would not encourage another to take it on single-handedly. It requires the individual to dedicate most nights and weekends to the task, and very few partners would tolerate this as my wife, Patricia, has done.

Although passing on the editorial responsibilities, I hope to continue writing for *Forum* as one of the Editors' Emeriti and to continue to oversee the "Pioneer's Page" in future editions. One of my most pressing and immediate tasks will be to oversee the compilation of an index of the last 18 editions of *Forum*. This will be cumulative with the 5 year Index prepared in mid-1996 by Drs. Norwood and Lehr so that information contained in the past 18 editions will be more accessible to readers. Perhaps in the future the index can be upgraded annually.

Brainstorm in Baltimore

ISHRS Past President James Vogel held a 1-day seminar at his office in Baltimore on September 15th to take advantage of the influx of hair transplant

surgeons en route to Washington. Amongst the 12 invited participants were surgeons from Europe, Asia, North and South America, and Australia, with over two hundred years of hair restoration experience between the dozen.

The morning was spent in observing Dr. Vogel and his team preparing and inserting follicular grafts. After lunch, the afternoon was spent in a most informative session where each of the participants presented either their worst cases or some particular problem case. The idea was not to demonstrate how clever we were, but on the contrary, to show that problems can arise for all of us and to swap ideas on problem prevention and possible solutions.

After a most-stimulating afternoon, we were transported to the new country estate of Jim and Diane where we were treated to a barbecue feast fit for a king. Some of the younger participants continued scientific discussions in the commodious spa until early morning, but some of us, older and wiser, slipped away to fight another day. After all, there were to be 4 hard days of debate and partying ahead in Washington!

Washington Meeting

The Washington meeting was possibly the best run and most interesting meet-

Season's Greetings
and a
Happy New Year

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ing yet held by the ISHRS. Successive coordinators have been able to build on the experiences of those who have gone before, but even so, there are a host of problems which may arise to plague the organizers. Paul Cotterill is to be congratulated for his outstanding effort on this occasion.

Slot Punches

The Hitzig slot punches may seem an anachronism in these days of microscopically prepared follicular units, but they work surprisingly well. I have used the larger 4 mm ones for "fill-in" work on old punch grafts with great results over the past year. When in New York in September, I saw Gary using the small 2.7-mm slot punches and was able to examine the results on several patients who had been done earlier in the year. I was very impressed with the naturalness of hair growth, absence of pitting or lumpiness, and density achieved from one sitting.

Readers will also be surprised (or horrified) to learn that these grafts were cut with loupe magnification of about x3 from 2.5 mm strips prepared with a multiblade knife. His cutters are heterosexual male Vietnam Veterans all on the wrong side of 40, but well trained and reliable guys who don't have days off or get "bitchy" with each other. Those who believe that patients only like female assistants might like to think again!

I was not surprised to learn that in a scientific trial comparing the slot punches with laser slots, the Hitzig units performed better than the slots made with the CO₂ laser and about the same as that with the YAG. This small trial was performed at the WAHRS meeting in Orlando last March, and the blinded study was unveiled in Washington.

New Implanter

The surprise of the meeting was the unveiling of a completely new semi-automatic implanter by its inventor Barry Markman, MD, of Las Vegas. While the Rassman implanter has been undergoing development in public over the last year or two, the Markman device was a surprise to us all. It was demonstrated at

the live surgery session, and various comments were heard for and against the device.

In truth, it is too early for judgment on either the Rassman or Markman implanters until both have had fair trials in the field. Both work well, but whether either is cost-efficient will depend greatly on your volume of hair work and the way you run your practice. It may be necessary to build your schedule around an implanter rather than just integrating the device into your old routine.

Cardboard Lifesaver

Did you spot Stephen Chang's little device on the Poster Presentations in Washington? It is probably the simplest and cheapest invention of all time, but is potentially life-saving to physicians and assistants alike and gets my award for the "Most Practical Revelation of the Meeting."

It was a shield to guard against needlesticks, and was made from a simple piece of cardboard in which a hole was bored to receive the plastic needle cover. With the device so employed it becomes virtually impossible to stick oneself when recapping needles (a procedure which we are told not to do — but of course we all do many times a day).

ManguWhacker

Tony Mangubat's semi-automatic dissection device is not new, as it is almost identical in design to that of Boudjema, Khan, Blugerman, and others of years past. Perhaps it is "an idea whose time has come." It certainly appears to have captured the imagination of many surgeons, judging by

the number of letters I have received (for and against). I have published some of these in this edition, and its place in history will be settled, one way or the other, over the following 12 months I am sure.

Thanks to Regular Contributors

As this is my final *Forum* as Editor I would like to thank all those who have been regular contributors over the past 3 years. In particular, I would like to mention columnists Helen Marzola, Jim Arnold, Marc Pomerantz, Bill Coleman, Marcelo Gendelman, and Bob Leonard. Without the contributions of these fine people, my job would have been a great deal more difficult and *Forum* a lot slimmer.

Christmas wishes and Happy Holiday to all our readers. ■

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