

Historical Synopsis of the 2012 Academy Annual Meeting

The American Academy of Neurological Surgery met for its 74th Annual Meeting in an Indian Summer October 2012. Chatham, Massachusetts was the location and Chatham Bars Inn was the site of the Meeting. President Jim Rutka presided.

Chatham is located at the “elbow” of Cape Cod on the Atlantic Ocean and Nantucket Sound. Gray and Harbor seals have returned to this area in abundance to the delight of tourists and most of the local inhabitants and to the dismay of the fish and the fishermen. The Great White Shark has returned as well to the delight of the tourists and the local inhabitants (including the fishermen and to the dismay of the seals!

Secretary Mitch Berger noted the membership to be 105 Active, 55 Senior Active, 45 Senior Retired, 12 Corresponding, and 1 Honorary. Attendance at this meeting was 261. It was noted that there will be an increase in slots for new members over the next few years.

Dan Barrow, Treasurer, noted meeting revenues and expenses are roughly equal at \$225,000 each. The Academy continues to have assets in the \$1,000,000 range. He noted that industry support is increasingly problematic due to economic factors and regulatory scrutiny. Ideas for justifying grants from industry sponsors include endowment of guest speakers, awards for Academy Award winners, and NREF support.

Carl Heilman, Local Arrangements Chair, outlined the activities for the meeting which include fishing, golf, sightseeing, a clambake with entertainment by the Neurosurgical Jazz Quintet and the Annual Banquet held at the Beach House on the oceanfront. Carl invited two local commercial fishermen to talk to the group about their lives, their work, and the issues facing the industry.

Nino Chiocca, Scientific Program Chair, noted there were 80 scientific abstracts submitted and 50 accepted.

Mark Hadley, Future Sites Chairman, previewed the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Academy to be held at Pelican Bay in Newport Beach, California. Kiawah Island is under consideration for the 2014 meeting. The membership voted to join with the German Academy for the 2015 meeting to be held in Heidelberg, Germany.

Fred Meyer was elected as President Elect to follow incoming President Griff Harsh and Corey Raffel elected as Vice-President. A Research Advisory Committee was established and it was decided that a super majority of 80% of those eligible to vote present at the Annual Meeting would now be the threshold for election to membership. The list of those under consideration for membership will be sent to the active members one month prior to the meeting for their comments.

A snapshot of the variety of presentations in the superb scientific meeting

President Jim Rutka gave his Presidential Address on William S. Keith, one of the Founders of the Academy and a pioneering Toronto neurosurgeon. “The Founder Effect” was discussed as laying the framework for the Academy’s mission, criteria for admission of new members, and format to be followed for the Annual Meetings – providing a base from which evolution follows.

Symposia topics included: 1.) The status of Prospective Clinical Trials in Neurosurgery in the areas of oncology, spine, neurodegenerative, and cerebrovascular disease. 2.) Brain Metastases – Survival and Outcomes. 3.) New Avenues in Deep Brain Stimulation. 4.) The Value of Surgical Volume and Experience.

Open papers were presented on various research topics in Neurosurgery and on Socioeconomics issues affecting the specialty.

There were Point-Counterpoint sessions on Aneurysm clipping versus coiling and standard craniotomy versus endoscopic endonasal approaches for skull base lesions.

A special lecture was delivered by Richard Delaney of the Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies whose mission is to work on ocean and coastal habitat protection, ecosystem management, and marine wildlife conservation. He discussed marine mammal research, whale rescue, marine education, public policy, Cape Cod Bay monitoring, marine geology, and fisheries research.