



Newsletter of the Society for Vascular Medicine and Biology

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New Feature: "Profiles in Leadership"

*This issue profiles **Dr. Bruce Gray**, COO of the American Board of Vascular Medicine and **Dr. Michael Bacharach**, President-Elect, Chair, Scientific Programs Committee*

Notes from the President John P. Cooke MD PhD



In this New Year, there is every indication that the Society for Vascular Medicine and Biology will continue to grow, and to fulfill its mission of improving care and education regarding vascular diseases. The Society is fortunate in having a number of highly talented and dedicated Fellows with a diversity of strengths employed to the benefit of the Society. In this issue of the Newsletter, you will find profiles of two of these SVMB Fellows, Drs. Bruce Gray and Michael Bacharach.

Highlights from the SVMB Board Meeting.

In December, the Board of Trustees met in New York City, following the Vascular Imaging meeting (The Vascular Imaging meeting on 12-8-05 was organized by SVMB fellows Drs. Emile Mohler and Marie Gerhard-Herman together with the American Society of Echocardiography). At the Board meeting, we heard some favorable reports from the officers and committee chairs.

Dr. Josh Beckman (Secretary) provided a robust report from the Membership Committee which he chairs. In the last year, membership increased about 12% (from 358 to 412 associates, members or Fellows). In the meantime, Dr. Beckman and his Credentials Committee reviewed and recommended approval of another 60 applications for membership. The Board accepted this recommendation, further increasing (by 15%) the SVMB membership. I am grateful for the hard work of Dr. Beckman and his committee which includes Drs. Jim Froehlich, Alain Drooz, Pavel Levy and Suman Rathbun.

Dr. Thom Rooke (Treasurer) reviewed the financial statements of the SVMB, which continues to maintain healthy reserves. Dr. Michael Jaff (Chair, Finance Committee) set out his plans to grow the assets of the SVMB. Our current investment vehicle (a socially responsible investment fund) for the SVMB reserves has given disappointing returns. Accordingly, Dr. Jaff will investigate different investment vehicles for the SVMB and make a recommendation to the Board. In addition, Dr. Jaff described preliminary plans for a new fundraising initiative for the SVMB. Dr. Jaff has been a stalwart and highly successful fundraiser for the SVMB. These revenues have permitted the SVMB to pursue its educational and clinical missions, which notably include the annual scientific sessions, and the work of the American Board of Vascular Medicine.

Dr. Thom Rooke provided a report on the Board Review Course for 2006, which will run concurrently with our Annual Scientific Session at the Loews Hotel in Philadelphia (see Dr. Bacharach's biosketch below which contains his plans for the 2006 SVMB Annual Scientific Sessions). Last year Dr. Rooke provided masterful organization of a splendid Board Review Course in Vascular and Endovascular Medicine. The course was oversubscribed, and the attendees

gave the course high scores. The course will be much the same as last year, providing excellent educational content to prepare attendees for the certifying exams in the fall.

Dr. James Froehlich provided a comprehensive report from his Communications Committee, which has been exceedingly busy in the past six months. They have reviewed and provided thoughtful comments on three position papers for which SVMB endorsement was requested. The first of these was the TASC II Guidelines, which are a version of the original TASC guidelines, directed toward non-specialists. This document had significant flaws. The Committee provided a thoughtful and comprehensive review, and recommended significant revision prior to SVMB endorsement. The committee also reviewed and recommended SVMB endorsement of the ETAP document after minor revisions. The ETAP document is a multi-society consensus paper that provides guidelines for the endovascular treatment of aortic aneurysms. Finally, the Committee reviewed and recommended endorsement of the ACC-AHA PAD Guidelines, on which the SVMB is now a signatory. Dr. Froehlich was ably assisted in his task by the other members of the Committee including Drs. Joshua Beckman, Susan Begelman, Scott Kinlay, and Emile Mohler.

Dr. Steve Dean is the Chair of the Clinical Practice Committee. The most recent action taken by Dr. Dean's committee was to send a letter to Senator Enzi regarding the SVMB concerns over the pending legislation entitled "Consumer Assurance of Radiologic Excellence Act of 2005". This is a proposal to place all radiologic imaging accreditation [which would include vascular ultrasonography] under new federal regulations within 18 months of bill passage. The SVMB letter outlined three concerns: 1. We questioned whether data are available that suggest that nationwide imaging is substandard and thus requires federal intervention; 2. We apprised the Senator of private organizations have already established reliable national accreditation standards [e.g. ICAVL]; and 3. We requested that if this proposal becomes law, the phase in period should be over a 36 month period and not the stated 18 month period. We noted that rural areas are already underserved by ultrasonographers and that any mandatory licensing guidelines could make the situation worse.

Dr. Dean and I laid out plans for a new initiative to seek remuneration for performing office measurement of the ankle-brachial index. As we all know, peripheral arterial disease is underdiagnosed, with less than half of these patients diagnosed. The PARTNERS study revealed that the only about 40% of patients are recognized. As a result, life-saving therapies are often not employed in these individuals, with under-utilization of anti-platelet therapy, statin drugs, and ACE inhibitors. Our initiative is being undertaken with the view that remuneration for ABI measurement will provide a needed incentive for primary practitioners to appropriately apply the test, and optimize care. Enhanced diagnosis of PAD will lead to appropriate risk factor modification and will ultimately save lives.

Dr. Dean intends to seek to have ABI remuneration added as a rider to a CMS appropriations bill. This is an approach that has been used to obtain funding for other medical interventions that are well-accepted, including screening cholesterol measurements and colonoscopy. Most recently, ultrasound screening for abdominal aortic aneurysms was approved in this manner. This initiative of the SVMB will be pursued by Dr. Dean and his committee which includes Drs. Cooke, Drooz, Rathbun, Beckman, Annex, and Hirsch. In parallel, Dr. Beckman will organize and edit a consensus document on the proper utilization of the ABI.

Dr. Creager (Editor, Vascular Medicine) informed the Board of the progress of the SVMB journal. Notably, there has been a 50% increase in submissions to the Journal by comparison to 2004. Furthermore, the influence of the Journal has increased as judged by its increasing impact factor. The majority of subscriptions to the Journal are still largely Society members, but the Journal is indexed in Index Medicus and can be accessed on-line through Pub Med and other electronic sources.

Profiles in Leadership.

I intend to have these profiles as a regular feature of the Newsletter. The profiles will introduce you to SVMB Fellows who are dedicating their time and talent to the missions of the Society. Their work deserves recognition. In addition, by highlighting the activities of these leaders, I hope to encourage the next generation of leaders to emerge. If the work of these individuals interests you, please contact them and offer your assistance. At the very least, introduce yourself to them at the Annual Scientific Session and thank them for their hard work on behalf of the Society.

Dr. Bruce Gray, COO of the American Board of Vascular Medicine

The first individual I have chosen to profile is Dr. Bruce Gray. In days hence, when we are gathered round the hearth and remembering times gone by, glasses will be raised to the name of Bruce Gray. I believe that the inception of the ABVM will be seen as an inflection point in the growth and influence of the Society. Bruce Gray has worked tirelessly to organize the ABVM, to oversee its administration, and to execute the first successful certifying examinations in Vascular and Endovascular Medicine in September of 2005. Over 300 individuals took the examinations, which were administered nationally. The first certifying examination represents a watershed moment for Vascular Medicine, as our discipline emerges as a distinct subspecialty.

Of course, Bruce Gray had a band of brothers assisting him in this great effort. Individuals that deserve accolades for their contribution to the success of the ABVM include Past President Dr. Michael Jaff, who played a primary role in the founding of ABVM. (The preceding President, Dr. Jon Halperin, first raised the issue of a certifying examination to the membership. His survey of the membership found an overwhelming majority in favor of an SVMB-led effort to found a certifying body). Led by Dr. Jaff the SVMB Board of Trustees voted to provide a certification process in

general vascular medicine and endovascular medicine. Subsequently, the ABVM was incorporated as a separate entity, with its own bylaws, and a multidisciplinary board of directors. The SVMB provided a loan to ABVM, which permitted the Board to begin operations. A number of Fellows labored long and hard to make the examination a success, investing many hours of thought and discussion in the development of test questions. These dedicated physicians included Drs. Michael Bacharach, Mark Creager, Jon Halperin, Jeffrey Olin, Kenneth Rosenfield, Christopher White, John Cooke and Krishna Rocha-Singh.

Bruce Gray was raised in Columbus, Ohio, the third of four children. "I was blessed with parents who gave me an opportunity to pursue my dreams". His plans for a medical career were precipitated by his own sudden encounter with emergency medicine at the age of 6. After taking a tumble from his bicycle and sustaining a head laceration, he was whisked to the hospital. He vividly remembers his ride in the big red ambulance. "The experience was so cool, I knew then that I would be a physician". He pursued his undergraduate study at The College of Wooster. Graduate school at The Ohio State University was followed by medical school at Ohio University. After a rotating internship he did a medical residency, searching for the specialty that would suit him best.

"During residency I did an elective rotation in Vascular Medicine at The Cleveland Clinic Foundation (CCF). The chairman was Jess Young, M.D., and the fellowship program director was Jeff Olin, D.O., two of the most influential mentors a young physician could ever want." Bruce had found his field of dreams. Bruce immersed himself in Vascular Medicine at one of the finest training programs in the country, and subsequently pursued additional training in peripheral arterial interventions. His current practice includes infrainguinal arterial interventions, abdominal aortic stent-grafts and carotid stents, about 12-20 cases per week. Bruce makes his home in Greenville, South Carolina, with his family: Debby, Katey, Annmarie, Lauralee, and Weston. American Board of Vascular Medicine Web site: <http://www.vascularboard.org>

Dr. Michael Bacharach, President-Elect. Chair, Scientific Programs Committee.

Dr. Bacharach has a history of service to the SVMB, most recently as Treasurer, and now as President-Elect. As President-Elect of the Society, Michael Bacharach is responsible for this year's annual scientific session. At our most recent Board Meeting, the trustees were very enthusiastic about Dr. Bacharach's plans for the 2006 Annual Scientific Sessions. The Annual Scientific Session will take place in the Loews Hotel in Philadelphia, June 2-3. The sessions will be oriented toward clinical care, with updates on clinical trials, and sessions on vascular emergencies, diabetes and metabolic syndrome, vascular imaging, and healthcare policy. The old favorites, Vascular Jeopardy and the Vascular Debates are on the program, together with a new feature of Interesting Cases. (Please let Dr. Bacharach know if you would like to present a case.) The Young Investigators Awards will be transformed into a Moderated Poster Session this year. The Scientific Session for 2006 looks to be a stimulating and enjoyable educational event. The clinical focus of the meeting this year is reflective of Dr. Bacharach's training and current experience.

Dr. Bacharach heads up the Vascular Medicine and Peripheral Vascular Intervention group at the North Central Heart Institute in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He has a busy

general and interventional vascular practice that is enriched by his involvement in multiple peripheral vascular drug and device studies. After obtaining his medical degree at the University of Wisconsin, he did his internship and residency in Internal Medicine at the Mayo Clinic, and completed his training in cardiovascular medicine there. Subsequently, he completed his fellowship in Vascular Medicine and Peripheral Vascular Intervention at the Cleveland Clinic (Cleveland, OH). He is now Clinical Associate Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of South Dakota School of Medicine.

Executive Director's Report

Lorraine Bell

Just a quick note to call your attention to the following list of items that soon will be sent to the Membership in the mail or by email or appear on www.svmb.org SVMB's web site .

- 2006 Dues Invoices
 - Call for Abstracts for the SVMB's 17th Annual Scientific Sessions
 - Annual Scientific Sessions Program and Registration Information
 - Board Review Course Program and Registration Information (prepare for the ABVM certification exams)
 - Membership and Committee List and Roster Updates
 - Peripheral Arterial Disease Guidelines-Executive Summary and Full Text
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Upcoming Events

- Annual Scientific Sessions, June 2-3 Philadelphia Loews Hotel
 - SVMB Board Review Course, June 2-4 Philadelphia Loews Hotel
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