

February 2006

Dear Colleagues:

The 113th annual meeting of the Western Surgical Association was held at the Westin Mission Hills in Rancho Mirage, CA (near Palm Springs) from November 6-9, 2005. The resort was lovely and the meeting facilities were excellent, and the Association was rewarded with good attendance by members, spouses, and guest physicians. The quality of the scientific sessions and the social functions were superb. Our thanks to Gregory C. Greaney the local arrangements chairman. President Arthur S. McPhee's Presidential Address, "Lessons", was a delight. A record number of new members submitted papers for the J. Bradley Aust Award, and the winner was Donald E. Low, MD from Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle. His paper was entitled "Outcomes in Health Related Quality of Life After Esophagectomy for High Grade Dysplasia and Intramucosal Cancer".

A copy of the minutes of the Business Meeting is enclosed. In addition, if you did not attend the meeting, a copy of the program should be enclosed. Please review the program book. It includes the 2005 Scientific Program as well as the Transactions of the 2004 Meeting, Fabrizio Michelassi's presidential address from that meeting, memorials to deceased members, and the membership directory. Please review your demographic data in the directory to confirm its accuracy.

Also enclosed is the list of 23 new members elected to the Association. This slate of new members is superior. Thanks to all of you who recruited this great group of new members. Please drop them a note or e-mail of welcome and congratulations.

Now is the time to start the application process for new members. Please consider sponsoring a new member this year. The application process will be handled "on-line" this year. Prospective members must submit an on-line application. The applicant must also submit an updated curriculum vita. The applicant and/or sponsoring member is still responsible for submission of the sponsoring letter as well as 2 endorsing letters to the Secretary's office by May 1, 2006. Please review the new application form on our website.

Several members completed their terms of service to the Western Surgical Association this November. They include Vice-Presidents David M. Heimbach and William C. Abbott, and District Representative Merrill T. Dayton. Their efforts on behalf of the Association are most appreciated. The new officers elected at this year's business meeting are:

President:	Richard C. Thirlby	Seattle, WA
First Vice-President:	Wayne Schwesinger	San Antonio, TX
Second Vice-President:	David Antonenko	Grand Forks, ND
Secretary	Gregory J. Jurkovich	Seattle, WA
District Representative:	Leigh Anne Neumayer	Salt Lake City, UT

The call for abstracts will be included in the March Newsletter. The deadline for abstract submission had to be moved back to June 1 to comply with the ACS/CME requirements.

Locations and dates for upcoming meetings are listed below. Be sure to mark the dates on your calendars and pocket PC's. Also, please check out the link on our web site to next year's site at the Hilton of Los Cabos, Mexico. The resorts and beaches of Los Cabos are spectacular, and this is one meeting you should not miss. Local arrangements chair David Hoyt of San Diego, along with Lettuce Planet meeting managers Nonie Lowry and Marcia McIntyre, already have several unique social functions planned. Mark your calendars and make it a family get away!

Future meeting plans at the present time include:

Hilton Beach/Golf Resort	Los Cabos, Mexico	November 12-15, 2006
The Broadmoor Resort	Colorado Springs, CO	November 4-7, 2007
Eldorado Hotel	Santa Fe, NM	November 9-12, 2008

Plans are underway for the 2009 annual meeting to be held in San Antonio, Texas, and for the 2010 annual meeting to be in Chicago, Illinois.

Please check out our website. The membership directory is very user friendly. Information for next year's meeting and forms are available. **Please be sure we have your correct e-mail address**, as our hope is to communicate more via e-mail, saving some postage costs.

I am delighted to serve as your new secretary, and will work hard to maintain the high level of commitment exhibited by Dr. Thirlby and all the past secretaries. Please call or email me or my or my assistant Lisa Querido if there is anything we can do to support The Western.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory J. ("Jerry") Jurkovich, MD, FACS
Secretary, Western Surgical Association