A HOUSE DIVIDED
As many of you know, earlier this year, the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) decided to run its first national meeting on its own without the assistance of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) head office. As a result, the CNS held its 50th Anniversary Meeting in San Antonio Texas which was the second most successful meeting in the history of the CNS in terms of attendance, sponsorship, and revenues gained. The Division of Neurosurgery at the University of Toronto was very well represented (see below) in San Antonio, and I congratulate our faculty and residents for their many outstanding presentations and posters.

The withdrawal of the CNS from the AANS has led to significant economic hardships for the AANS, and strained relationships between these two organizations. Last year, the AANS posted a near $1 million deficit in its annual budget. While part of this deficit is explained by the loss of revenues associated with running the CNS annual meetings, the AANS has also suffered from poor returns on investments and publications, a costly
administrative service, and decreased revenues from the Journal of Neurosurgery, one of its major sources of funding.

Currently, there is limited dialogue between the CNS and AANS executive offices. I personally view this as a most unfortunate dispute. At present, neither organization seems willing to make concessions with or yield to the other. I firmly believe that there should be only one major American neurosurgical organization on this continent and that the AANS and CNS will merge at some point over the next decade. Until that time, it will be interesting to watch how the AANS and CNS compete for membership applications. I have just learned that the AANS is offering free membership to residents; and that registration fees for the AANS meeting for Canadian neurosurgeons will be dropped by nearly two thirds. I will keep you all apprised of future developments between the CNS and AANS as time goes on.

HONOURS, AWARDS AND APPOINTMENTS
Abhaya Kulkarni received the Resident Research Award at the CNS meeting in San Antonio, Texas, for his presentation on an Analysis of CSF Shunt Infections.

Michael Taylor received the Preuss Resident Research Award at the CNS in San Antonio Texas for his presentation on hSNF5 Mutations in Pediatric Posterior Fossa Tumours.

Michael Taylor won the Finlayson award for best research paper presented at the Canadian Association of Neuropathologists meeting in Banff, Calgary, October, 2000. His presentation was entitled Molecular cloning, genomic structure, mapping and mutational analysis of human suppressor of fused (hSu(fu), a candidate tumour suppressor gene for medulloblastoma/PNET on chromosome 10q24.3.

Jim Rutka was invited to deliver the Royal College Lecture at the 43rd Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of Neuropathologists in Banff, Calgary, October 19th 2000. His presentation was entitled Novel Insights into the Genetics and Pathology of Human Brain tumors.

Fred Gentili was voted in as a member of the Nominating Committee for the North American Skull Base Society.

Michael Fehlings has recently been awarded the Cervical Spine Research Society Award for work on “Molecular mechanisms of human cervical spondylotic myelopathy: role of the FAS and p75 death receptor signalling pathways”. Co-authors on this research paper were Wenru Yu, Patrick Shannon, and Lali Sekhon.

Steve Casha received a fellowship award for his work on the Role of the FAS and p75 death receptor pathways in apoptosis after spinal cord injury from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).
Nicholas Phan received a post-doctoral fellowship award from the CIHR for his research studies in the laboratory of Dr. Michael Fehlings

Michael Fehlings has received a research award from the CIHR for his project entitled Investigation and treatment of traumatic axonal dysfunction after spinal cord injury.

Michael Fehlings and L. Zhang have received a grant award from the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation for their research proposal entitled Investigation of changes in potassium and glutamate ion channel activity in glial cells after spinal cord injury: patch clamp studies in adult rat spinal cord slice.

Michael Fehlings has received a grant from PSI for the Role of metabotropic glutamate receptors in acute spinal cord injury.

Michael Fehlings and John Roder are co-applicants on a grant entitled Examination of the excitotoxic hypothesis of spinal cord injury using genetically modified mice from the Spinal Cord Research Foundation.

Michael Fehlings and John Roder have received funding from the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation for the grant entitled Use of genetically modified mice to probe the excitotoxic hypothesis of spinal cord injury.

Michael Fehlings has received funding from the Cervical Spine Research Society for his grant entitled Neuroprotection of the injured spinal cord: evaluation of the therapeutic role of caspase inhibitors in blocking post-traumatic apoptosis.

Michael Fehlings has just received Premier’s Research Excellence Award for his work entitled Role of FAS activated caspases in the pathophysiology of spinal cord injury.

Michael Fehlings, and co-applicants L. Zhang, J. Eubanks, J. Gurd, P. Carlen, A. Baker have received funding from the CIHR/Canadian Neurotrauma Research program for their grant entitled Role of glial AMPA/Kainate receptors in neurotrauma.

Michael Fehlings and his co-researchers have received approval of 12 research grants totaling $1,891,716.00, varying in length from one to three years. Six of his students also received approval of 8 grants, totaling $616,000.

On behalf of the Division of Neurosurgery I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Michael Fehlings for his spectacular successes at the recent grants panels competitions!

NEW CHAIR IN NEURO-ONCOLOGY ESTABLISHED AT UHN
The Alan and Susan Hudson Chair in Neuro-Oncology has been established at the University Health Network. This new Chair is fully funded thanks to $1 million dollar donations each from the PMH and TGH/TWH Foundations. The Chair was created to
support research in the field of neuro-oncology in honour of Alan Hudson, former Chairman of the Division of Neurosurgery 1979-1989, and his wife Susan. A committee will soon be struck to determine the terms of reference for this Chair and to identify a Chair holder with outstanding credentials.

PUBLICATIONS
Ginsberg HJ, Sum A, Drake JM, Cobbold RSC. Ventriculoperitoneal shunt flow dependency on the number of patent holes in a ventricular catheter. Pediatr Neurosurg 33:7-11, 2000 (July)


The major neuroscience journals will be scanned, and a Medline search will be performed every month for each Neurosurgical Staff. If you have other publications in journals not tracked by these methods, please give the details to Stephanie at 813-8441.

VISITING PROFESSORSHIPS
Andres Lozano. Invited Speaker. 6th International Congress of Parkinson’s Disease and Movement Disorders, June 11-15, 2000. Barcelona, Spain. 1) June 11, Chair, Teaching Course 8; Surgery of Parkinson’s Disease and Dyskinesias; Technical aspects; Surgical Treatment and Dystonia. 2) June 14, Chair, Plenary Session 8, Surgery for Movement Disorders; Chair, Round Table: Target and Patient Selection.
Andres Lozano. Invited Speaker. XIX Neurosurgery Colombian Congress, August 3-6, 2000. Medellin, Columbia. 1) August 3rd, Professor, Pre-congress Course, Movement Disorders (1) Overview of the anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology of the basal ganglia, thalamus and the subthalamic nucleus. (2) Subthalamic nucleus stimulation for movement disorders; (3) Thalamic and pallidal stimulation for movement disorders. 2) August 4th, speaker/Lecturer, Surgical management of tremor.


PERIPHERAL NERVE SYMPOSIUM IN HONOUR OF ALAN HUDSON
On September 19th, 2000, a special symposium in honour of Dr. Alan Hudson was held at the University of Toronto Faculty Club. The scientific program included lectures from visiting guests Susan MacKinnon, Peter Richardson, David Kline, Allan Belzberg, Wolfram Tetzlaff, and Tessa Gordon. From the University of Toronto Division of Neurosurgery, presentations were given by Eve Tsai, Lily Angelov, Steve Casha, Michael Fehlings, Richard Moulton, Rajiv Midha, and Abjihit Guha. A special thanks to Raj Midha for organizing the Scientific Program for the Symposium and to Chris Wallace for organizing the event.

DIVISION OF NEUROSURGERY AT THE 50TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CNS, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

PRACTICAL COURSES
Michael Fehlings. Cervical spine stabilization.
Rajiv Midha. Exposure and surgery of the peripheral nerves.
Michael Fehlings. Critical care for neurotrauma.

LUNCHEON SEMINARS
Richard Perrin. Extreme neurosurgery: operating in hostile environments.
Peter Dirks. Pediatric spine surgery.
Andres Lozano. Surgical management of tremor: role of thalamotomy, chronic thalamic stimulation, and stereotactic radiosurgical thalamotomy.
Rajiv Midha. Surgical management of brachial plexus pathology.
Michael Fehlings. Spinal cord injury management.
Michael Fehlings. Current management of odontoid fractures.
Ab Guha. Treatment strategies for spinal cord tumors.
James Drake. Managing shunt complications.
Andres Lozano. Video case management: advanced Parkinson’s Disease and dystonia.

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM
Andres Lozano, Surgical Drug-Delivery for Neurodegenerative Diseases.
Michael Fehlings. Acute interventions in spinal cord injury: What do we know, what should we do?
Ahmed Alkhani, F. Khan, A. Lang, W. Hutchison, J. Doostrovsky. The response to pallidal surgery for dystonia is dependent on the etiology.
Eve Tsai, M. Fehlings, C. Tator. Long term follow-up of treated posttraumatic syringomyelia: role of magnetic resonance imaging in the evaluation of outcome.
Michael Fehlings. The use of steroids for spinal cord injury.
Kamal Thapar, Medical management of pituitary tumors. Agonists or Agony?

LOUGHEED COURSE, FALL 2000
The Lougheed Microvascular Course was held October 2-6, 2000, with 8 participants from across the country. This year’s guest lecturer was Dr. Gary Ferguson from the University of Western Ontario. Special thanks to Chris Wallace who organized this outstanding course for residents in neurosurgery across the county.

NEUROSURGICAL PRODUCTIVITY
Born to Phil and Eugenie Porter, a baby boy, Colin, 8 lbs., Friday, October 20th, 2000. Congratulations Phil and Eugenie!

TYING THE KNOT
On September 30th, 2000, Dr.’s Julian Spears (PGY3) and Danna Westergaard (PGY1) were married in Charlottetown PEI. Congratulations to our newest neurosurgical couple!

JOB & GRANT OPPORTUNITIES
The Pharmacia-Upjohn Resident Research Awards in Cerebrovascular Disease. Application deadline March 1, 2001. Applications are in the residents’ mail slots in Stephanie’s office.
RESIDENTS' CORNER
Submissions for the Horsey Prize for clinical research projects are being sought. The Horsey Prize Competition will take place during the Botterell Lectureship November 27th, 9 – 12 am. Please send your abstracts and papers to Dr. Michael Fehlings.

Resident-Faculty hockey match. Sunday, December 17th, 2000 at 8 p.m., Varsity Arena.

ASIA spinal cord clinical assessment handbooks are available in Dr. Rutka’s office. Please ask Stephanie.

Neurosurgery Research and Education Foundation Research Fellowship awards for residents in Neurosurgery. They are valued at $35,000 (USD) and are for two years. Deadline for receipt of applications is Friday December 1st, 2000. For applications, please see http://www.neurosurgery.org/aans.research

William P. Van Wagenen Fellowships for 2001. All senior residents interested in applying for these highly-coveted traveling fellowships sponsored by the AANS should go to http://www.neurosurgery.org/aans/research for more information.

The AANS will be offering free membership to residents. Please go to www.aans.org for more information. All residents are strongly encouraged to become resident members of the AANS.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH (Prepared by Robin Humphreys)

Lesions of the vagus nerve may result in all the following EXCEPT

(A) hoarseness
(B) difficulty in swallowing
(C) transient bradycardia
(D) loss of the baroreceptor reflex
(E) death when the lesion is bilateral

ANSWER TO THE LAST QUESTION (September NEUROSURGE volume 2; issue 1)

The answer is C.

Surrounding the brain, the subarachnoid space (thus between pia and arachnoid) shows local variations. At places where bulges are present, they are referred to as cisterns.

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH
This is a multiple choice exam in neurosurgery for the residents (and faculty) to try. Please enjoy!

UPCOMING NEUROSURGICAL MEETINGS

NATIONAL/NORTH AMERICAN:

The Fifth Annual Meeting of the Society for Neuro-Oncology, Chicago, Illinois, November 9-12, 2000. For further information, please see Stephanie.

AANS/CNS Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery, December 6-9, 2000, Coronado (San Diego), California.


First annual meeting of the Canadian Spine Society, Thursday March 22 – 24, 2001 Chateau Mont-Tremblant, Quebec.

3rd International Hydrocephalus Workshop, May 17-20, 2001, Kos, Greece

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO:

E. Harry Botterell Lectureship, November 27th – 28th, 2000. This year’s honoured guest will be Professor Ron Tasker whose illustrious career in the Division of Neurosurgery will be recognized. The Scientific Program for this important event will be forthcoming. Resident attendance is mandatory.

City Wide Neurosurgery Rounds will be held this month at Sunnybrook Medical Centre, Harrison Hall, October 27th, 2000, 7 – 8 am.

The next City Wide Neurosurgery Rounds will be at The Hospital for Sick Children, Room 1527, 7 – 8 am, on November 24th, 2000

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO NEUROSURGICAL RESIDENT SEMINARS

November 3rd, Acute Cerebral Infarction, Clinical Presentation,
Nicolas Phan/TBD

November 10th, Cerebral Ischemia
Andrew Nataraj/Michael Tymianski

November 17th, Antiplatelet Therapy,
Ash Singhal/Cheryl Jaigoben

November 24th, Carotid Endarterectomy; Symptomatic/Asymptomatic,
Ratan Bhardwaj/William Tucker

November 29th, Journal Club, Carotid Endarterectomy Trials, 138 Cheltenham Ave, 7 p.m.

THE SEMINARS WILL BE HELD AT THE HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN FROM 0900-1200 HOURS IN ROOM 1527, 1ST FLOOR, GERRARD WING, UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.

HEADS OF DIVISIONS MEETING
Thursday, November 23rd, 2000 0700-0800 hours, North Conference Room, Room 1431, First Floor Black Wing

RESIDENCY PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Tuesday, October 31st, 2000 0700-0800 hours, Room 1445, First Floor Gerrard Wing
Tuesday, November 28th, 2000 0700-0800 hours, Room 1445, First Floor Gerrard Wing