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FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE
The calendar year began with several important academic events. Michael and Judy Schwartz hosted the first journal club of the year for faculty and residents at their home Thursday January 19, 2006. Several important articles in the neurosciences were discussed. The following day, the residents wrote their Head Injury and Spine Block examination at Sick Kids.

On Saturday January 21st, Jim Drake organized the second neuro-endoscopy course for our neurosurgery residents. Some 20 residents were in attendance. The guest visiting professor who assisted with the course was Dr Giuseppe Cinalli from Naples Italy. Dr’s Dirks and Kulkarni also assisted with the course. Many thanks to Jim Drake for providing this outstanding educational course for the residents.

Dr Eelco Wijdicks, Chair, Division of Critical Care Neurology, from the Mayo College of Medicine, delivered the Marshall Lecture on the topic of “Brain Death”, Thursday January 26th, 2006. The lecture and event were organized by Dr David Bevan, Chair of Anesthesiology at U of T.

On the same day, the eight annual Arthur and Sonia Labatt Brain Tumour Research Centre Academic Lecture was given by Dr Webster Cavenee, Director of the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research in La Jolla, San Diego. His lecture was entitled: Defective receptor signaling in human brain tumors: Mechanisms and therapeutic opportunities. Thanks to Ab Guha for arranging and organizing Dr Cavenee’s visit to Toronto.

From January 26-28, the Division hosted the CaRMS candidates from across Canada. Interviews were granted to 15 prospective applicants. A social event was held at the
home of Katie and Chris Wallace January 27th, 2006. This year, the Division of Neurosurgery can take 4 PGY1 residents into the program. Special thanks to Sandi Amaral for organizing the visit of all the candidates.

HONOURS, GRANTS AND AWARDS
Michael Tymianski received a new 5 year CIHR grant for his work entitled "Protein nitration in ischemic and traumatic brain damage". As this was a particularly tough competition at CIHR, we congratulate Michael in his wonderful success with his proposal.

Gelareh Zadeh was awarded a fellowship salary support $80,000.00 from Cancer Care Ontario

Jim Rutka has been appointed to the Advisory Board for Neurosurgical Review.

Jim Rutka, Michael Taylor and Peter Dirks were awarded one of three grants provided by the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation (PBTF) of the United States worth $125,000/year for a maximum of 5 years. The other two grants went to the University of California San Francisco, and the Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. With these new grants the researchers at UCSF, CHLA, and Sick Kids will collaborate to generate scientific knowledge of pediatric brain tumors that will bring about innovative and less invasive clinical treatments.

Michael Taylor received a grant from Brainchild entitled: Identification of Novel Tumor Suppressor Genes in Medulloblastoma Through Inhibition of Nonsense Mediated mRNA Decay.

Michael Taylor received a grant from Brainchild entitled: Ultrahigh Resolution Genotyping of Medulloblastoma

PUBLICATIONS


Bernstein M: $250. cell2soul Journal of Humane Medicine and Medical Humanities Volume 1, Number 4, page a1
<http://www.cell2soul.org/issues/article.php?issue_dir=v1/i4&article_num=a 1 >


Bernstein M: E-mail etiquette. Parkhurst Exchange 14:210, 2006

Bernstein M: Two dogs are better than one. Dogs in Canada January 2006, page 12


VISITING PROFESSORSHIPS
Peter Dirks was an Invited Lecturer for the neuro-oncology research group seminar series at Washington University at St Louis: "Stem Cells: Unlocking the secrets of human brain tumors". January 9, 2006

Ab Guha was an Invited Speaker at the RTOG TRP meeting. “Pre-clinical Glioma Models”. Miami, Florida, January 20, 2006

Michael Taylor was the Scientific officer at the NCIC grant review panel, panel J (Pathology and Tumor Markers).


Andres Lozano was an Invited International Speaker. Federation of European Neuroscience Societies/Hertie Foundation (FENS/Hertie) Winter School. “Advances in surgery for Parkinson’s disease.” Kitzbuhel, Austria. December 11-13, 2005

Jim Rutka was Visiting Professor at Johns Hopkins University, Grand Rounds Lecture, "Medulloblastoma: From a difficult past to a promising future". Baltimore,MD, January 5, 2006


RESIDENTS’ CORNER
Canadian Neurosurgery Written Practice Exam (prepared by Dr. Max Findlay) will be held on Friday, February 24th, 2006 12:30 – 3:30 p.m. at Sunnybrook.

Surgical Investigators In-Training. Call for Submissions to the Committee for the Fundamental Surgical Problems, Division of Education, American College of Surgeons. Abstract Submissions from November 1, 2005 – March 1, 2006.

This year’s CaRM’s candidates visited the Division of Neurosurgery, University of Toronto on Friday, January 27th and Saturday, January 28th, 2006
Minimally Invasive Surgery and Endoscopic Skull Base Dissection Course, February 2-3, 2006 at the Surgical Skills Centre. Sponsored by the Department of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery & Division of Neurosurgery, Department of Surgery, University of Toronto.

Thoracic and Lumbar Spine Fixation Course, Friday, February 17th – Monday February 20th, 2006 at the Surgical Skills Centre. Eric Massicotte is the Course Director. Anyone interested, please let Stephanie know. POSTPONED UNTIL JUNE 2006

The Keith Visiting Professorship will be held February 13-14, 2006, at TWH. This year’s visiting professor is Dr Webster Pilcher, Chairman, Neurosurgery, University of Rochester. His main clinical interest is epilepsy surgery. Residents are encouraged to submit their research work for the Morley Prize. All research residents will be expected to provide a synopsis of the status of their current research projects.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH (Prepared by Robin Humphreys)
A brain MRI scan taken from a 6 month old baby, revealed that while the overall size of the cerebral cortex was normal, the size of the pyramidal tracts was considerably smaller than normal. What is the most likely explanation for this defect?

A. Reduction in numbers of cortical neurons giving rise to pyramidal tract fibres.
B. Reduction in the numbers of synaptic contacts made by pyramidal tract neurons.
C. Reduction in the extent of myelin found on pyramidal tract neurons.
D. Reduction in the amount of neurotransmitter released by pyramidal tract neurons.
E. Reduction in the number of glial cells attached to pyramidal tract neurons.

ANSWER TO THE LAST QUESTION (DECEMBER NEUROSURGE Volume 7; Issue 4)
A patient was examined because he was having difficulty moving his eyes horizontally to one side. The physician concluded that the individual had a vascular lesion. Which of the following structures was affected by this lesion?

A. Paramedian pontine reticular formation.
B. Ventrolateral medulla.
C. Cranial nerve IV.
D. Primary motor cortex.
E. Ventral posterolateral nucleus of thalamus.

The answer is A. The paramedian pontine reticular formation is an important integrating structure controlling the position of the eyes. It receives inputs from the cerebral cortex (presumably the region of the frontal eye fields) and fibres from cerebellum, spinal cord and vestibular complex. Its efferent fibres project to the cerebellum, vestibular complex, pretectal region, interstitial nucleus of Cajal, and the nucleus of Darkschewitsch of the rostral midbrain. These are all nuclei concerned with the regulation of eye position and movements. It is not related to any other known motor or auditory functions, nor has it been shown to contain ascending noradrenergic neurons.
PDF OF THE MONTH

In this PDF below, you will find an excellent review by Yahya and colleagues from Sick Kids regarding the devastating impact of television tipovers in the toddler. Dr Yahya was a clinical fellow at Sick Kids, and is now a staff neurosurgeon at the American University of Beirut. TV tipovers are eminently preventable injuries. This article speaks to the issue of head-injury prevention in the house hold. Residents and faculty with young children, please take note!

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH
http://www.medlib.med.utah.edu/WebPath/HISTHTML/NEURANAT/NEURANCA.html

For those residents studying for their examinations this year, this is a good review site from the University of Utah in which gross and microscopic examples of neuroanatomical sections of the brain and spinal cord are labeled.

UPCOMING NEUROSURGICAL MEETINGS, EVENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
Department of Surgery University Rounds, Friday, February 3rd, 2006 at 07:30 a.m., Mount Sinai Hospital, Auditorium – 18th Floor. Kergin Lecture “Emergency General Surgery – Is Specialisation Possible?”. Professor O.J. Garden, University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

Derek Harwood-Nash Annual Lecture in Neuroradiology, Tuesday, February 7th, 2006 at 6:00 p.m., Main Auditorium, The Hospital for Sick Children. Dr. Nolan Altman, Miami Children’s Hospital. “fMR and DTI Imaging and Applications in Children”.

Keith Visiting Professorship, February 13-14, 2006, TWH. This year’s visiting professor is Dr Webster Pilcher from Rochester New York. The final program will be sent out shortly.

City Wide Rounds, Sunnybrook and Women’s College. Dr. Amin Kassam, Director, Center for Cranial Nerve Disorders and Microvascular Surgery, Pittsburgh, PA. “Recent Advances in Neurosurgical Endoscopy”. February 24th, 2006, 7:00 – 8:00 a.m.


Canadian Congress of Neurological Sciences, Montreal, Quebec. June 13-17, 2006.

AANS/CNS Section on Pain Bi-Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA., April 21, 2006


8th International Neurotrauma Symposium, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, May 21-25, 2006


NEUROSURGERY RESIDENT SEMINARS, 9 a.m. to noon, Room 1527, The Hospital for Sick Children unless otherwise noted.

Friday, February 3, 2006
Topic: Surgery for Glial Tumors
Dr. Mark Bernstein: Craniotomy
Dr. Mark Bernstein: Re-operation
Dr. Mark Bernstein: Image-guided biopsy
Dr. Mark Bernstein: Low grade gliomas
Dr. Zul Kaderali: Review of literature on radiosurgery and experimental therapies involving surgery

Friday, February 10, 2006
Topic: Skull Base Surgery
Dr. Fred Gentili: Principles of Skull Base Surgery/Approaches
Dr. Michael Tymianski: Management of CPA tumors
Mr. Roger Sarjeant: Neurophysiological monitoring of skull base + CPA

Monday, February 13, 2006
2006 William S. Keith Lectureship in Neurosurgery
Toronto Western Hospital, Main Auditorium, West Wing, 2nd Floor, Room 401
Guest Lecturer: Dr. Webster Pilcher, Frank P. Smith Professor and Chair, Department of Neurological Surgery, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY
0900-1200 Presentation of Research Papers by University of Toronto Residents including competition for the Thomas P. Morley Prizes
1330-1700 Mini-Symposium: Basic Science
Guest Lecturer: Dr. Berislav Zlokovic
Tuesday, February 14, 2006  
2006 William S. Keith Lectureship in Neurosurgery  
Toronto Western Hospital, Main Auditorium, West Wing, 2nd Floor, Room 401  
0900-1200 Case Presentations with Professor Webster Pilcher  
1430-1700 Mini-Symposium: Epilepsy  
Clinical Presentations by local faculty and invited guests

Friday, February 17th  
Tumour Block Session

Friday, February 24, 2006  
City Wide Rounds – Sunnybrook & Women's Health Sciences Centre, The McLaughlin Auditorium, Room E-ground 61  
Guest Lecturer: Dr. Amin Kassam, Associate Professor of Neurological Surgery, Director, Center for Cranial Nerve Disorders and Microvascular Surgery, Pittsburgh, PA  
0700-0800 Dr. Amin Kassam “Recent advances in neurosurgical endoscopy”  
0800-1200 Resident Case Presentations and Hands-On Teaching Session with Dr. Amin Kassam  
To follow the lecture, 1230-1530 (E Wing, Room 325) Canadian Neurosurgery Written Practice Exam

HEADS OF DIVISIONS MEETING  
Thursday, February 23rd 2006, North Conference Room @ 7 a.m.

RESIDENCY PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING  
Tuesday, February 7th, 2006, Room 6711 @ 7 a.m.