

Letter from the President



P. Ashley Wackym, M.D.
2007-2008 ARO President

We are fortunate to host the 31st MidWinter Meeting at the Phoenix Convention Center. The weather in Phoenix should be amazing, particularly compared to what many of us normally experience in many parts of the world during the month of February (recall that I live in Wisconsin and have five months without snow). For the first time we are also able to hold the meeting in a convention center and have our organization committed to six different hotels – each with a range of room rates. The meeting space and meeting environment may prove to be the best that we have experienced in several decades, which I personally look forward to experiencing again.

The Program Committee under the leadership of Dr. John Middlebrooks has assembled an impressive group of symposia for the 2008 MidWinter Meeting, the titles of which are as follows: “A Memorial to the Contributions of Merle Lawrence,” “Gene Expression and Regulation in the Auditory System,” “Emerging Approaches for Inner Ear Drug Delivery,” “Ear and Brain: Influences of Sex Hormones on Auditory Processing,” “State Dependence of Neural Processing in Central Auditory System” and “Music and Deafness.” The 2008 Presidential Symposium will be held on the morning of Sunday, February 17 and is entitled, “Translational Research in Otolaryngology.” The Presidential Symposium will cover basic concepts of translational research and will seek to return to our roots of scientist and clinician-scientist interaction in the ARO.

The source of ARO’s strength remains in what we have always been able to create: our science, our collegiality, the interaction of scientists and clinician-scientists, our committee members, and a dedicated core of hard-working leaders. This year, for the first time, the Council will undertake a strategic planning process that should help in charting the course for ARO for the next five to ten years. All of our Council Members and Committee Chairs are doing an impressive job. We should all give special thanks to Steve Rauch, Secretary-Treasurer; Peter Santi, Editor; David Lim, Historian and John Middlebrooks, Chair of the Program Committee. Past Presidents Bob Shannon and Lloyd Minor have been terrific mentors and contributors, as well. Paul Fuchs, President-Elect has continued to ask insightful and tough questions which has served to improve our organization. Likewise, the remaining Council Members Laurel Carney and Karen Steel have provided thoughtful input as the Council has made decisions on behalf of ARO. Thank you all – I really appreciate everything I have learned from you. Darla Dobson continues to do a terrific job as the Executive Director. Please thank all our Council Members and Committee Chairs for their service any time you get a chance.

The ARO Council has approved maintaining the current level of ARO membership dues this year; however, there will be an increase in registration fees for the MidWinter Meeting. Regular member meeting registration will increase to \$200 (previously \$150). Regular non-member meeting registration will increase to \$300 (previously \$275). Associate registration fees increase to \$100 (previously \$50), non-member resident or postdoctoral fellow registration fees will increase to \$170 (previously \$145) and non-member students will increase to \$150 (previously \$125). Even with these modest increases in registration fees for regular members, ARO dues and fees are still far less than comparable organizations in our field.

The decision to increase registration fees was difficult for the Council. The organization has always kept its operating expenses to a minimum and has maintained a fee structure that remains far less than the majority of other scientific societies. The increases are essential to insure the health and stability of the ARO.

It is also time to start thinking about organizing new symposia for the 2009 meeting in Baltimore. Conceptual plans for 2009 symposia are to be submitted to the Program Committee prior to the 2008 meeting (see guidelines on the ARO website). The Program Committee will meet during the 2008 meeting in Phoenix to select several proposals to be further developed for consideration for the 2009 meeting. Dr. Sharon Kujawa has

(Continued on page 2)



ARO 31st Annual MidWinter Meeting

February 16-21, 2008
The Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, AZ, USA

Travel Awards are available.
Visit the MWM section of the ARO website for details.

Letter from the President *(continued from page 1)*

accepted my invitation to succeed Dr. John Middlebrooks as the Chair of the Program Committee. I am certain that she will continue to enhance the quality of the program for our members.

Although we are still negotiating for sites for the 2010 meeting, we will maintain the commitment to return to the Baltimore Waterfront Marriott for the 2009 meeting to be held February 14-19. The Council has heard the split directives of either alternating East and West Coast venues with ease of access or identifying one location and establishing that venue as the new home for the ARO MidWinter Meeting. The latter represents the majority opinion; however the Council is sensitive to the equal distribution of the international membership between Asia and Europe. Over the next few years, we plan to continue moving locations and sampling different venues. We remain committed to finding a limited number of places that the vast majority enjoys. Toward that end, please fill out both the pre- and post-meeting questionnaires to give the Council much needed feedback.

We are always looking for more people to help with the mechanics of running the organization – i.e., serving on committees and running for elected offices. One of the wonderful aspects of the ARO is that it is still a small and socially functional (fun) organization. Rather than being big, bureaucratic and anonymous – ARO is small enough to respond quickly to members' recommendations and concerns. Participate in your organization – volunteer for committees.

Dr. Ruth Anne Eatock is doing a phenomenal job as editor of the *Journal of the Association for Research in Otolaryngology*. She is expanding the scope of the journal to reflect the diversity of our field and she is building on the established strengths of *JARO* to make it an even more successful and highly respected journal. I asked Dr. Debara Tucci to serve as the new Chair of the Publications Committee not only because of her experience as a clinician-investigator, but also because of her journal oversight experience that she has held with her role on the Board of Otolaryngology and Neurotology, Inc. – the business entity responsible for overseeing the journal of the same name. Over the past five years I have served with her in that capacity and based on what I have observed of her expertise, she will be invaluable as we consider the relationship with our current publisher and determine what will be best for ARO as we renegotiate and determine which publishing house will best serve the interests of the ARO in the future. I have no doubt that ARO will benefit from the next negotiation with whoever the next publisher of *JARO* will be.

I am truly looking forward to our meeting. In addition to the scientific excitement of the general sessions we again have a number of outstanding symposia. The majority of the membership is familiar with Phoenix and knows how the city and climate will contribute to the overall excitement of the meeting. Those of you who have not been to “Phoenix – the Valley of the Sun” are in for a treat!

Letter from the Editor



Peter A. Santi, Ph.D.
ARO Editor

This is the second ARO Newsletter since the 2007 MidWinter Meeting and its purpose is to provide you with information on the upcoming 31st annual ARO meeting in Phoenix, Arizona. As in previous years, abstracts will be accepted from September 1 - October 1. This newsletter includes information on new registration rates, special events at the 2008 meeting, hotel information and registration dates, and a call for proposals for invited oral presentations for the 2009 MidWinter Meeting. We are honored and pleased that Dr. James Battey, who is the director of the NIDCD, has again written an outstanding column on the latest information at the NIDCD. In addition, Dr. Ruth Anne Eatock, who is Editor of *JARO*, provides you with an update on the Association's journal. I hope that you find this newsletter useful and that you will frequently check the ARO website, at <http://www.aro.org> for the most current information. I welcome your suggestions and contributions for this newsletter, and I would like to thank Darla Dobson of Talley Management Group for her superb work in producing this newsletter, and Dr. David Lim for his excellent digital images.

Call for Abstracts

The Association for Research in Otolaryngology invites you to electronically submit an abstract for the 31st MidWinter Meeting being held at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona. Abstracts may be submitted electronically in any of the 20 ARO meeting categories. Please visit the ARO website to submit your abstract by clicking on the submission link. The abstract site will open on September 1, 2007. The deadline to submit is October 1, 2007. <http://www.aro.org>.



Phoenix Skyline

ARO Symposia, Workshops and Special Events for 2008

Short Course

- Bedside to Bench and Back, Challenging Conventional Wisdom

Presidential Symposium

- Translational Research in Otolaryngology

Scheduled Symposia and Workshops

- A Memorial to the Contributions of Merle Lawrence, PhD: Vascular Physiology and Cell Communication in the Cochlea: Pathways and Barriers
- Gene Expression and Regulation in the Auditory System
- Emerging Approaches for Inner Ear Drug Delivery
- Ear and Brain: Influences of Sex Hormones on Auditory Processing
- Noise-Induced Hearing Loss: From Molecules to Man
- Hair Cell Afferent Synaptic Transmission
- Non-Auditory Modulation of Auditory Processing in the Inferior Colliculus
- State Dependence of Neural Processing in Central Auditory System
- Music and Deafness

Make Your Hotel Reservations for the 2008 ARO MidWinter Meeting

Special hotel rates are available at the following hotels for ARO Attendees (based on availability). Reservations can be made by visiting the MidWinter Meeting page of the ARO website. The housing block will open on September 4, 2007.

- Wyndham Phoenix
\$195 single/double occupancy
- Hyatt Regency Phoenix
\$199 single/double occupancy
- Spring Hill Suites
\$174 single/double occupancy
- Hotel San Carlos
\$164 single/double occupancy
- Holiday Inn Express
\$142 single/double occupancy
- Best Western Central Phoenix
\$149 single/double occupancy

The Phoenix Convention Center is conveniently located to all hotel properties.

In Communication Research, Desperate Times Call for Progressive Measures



James F. Battey, M.D., Ph.D.
NIDCD Director

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), one of the National Institutes of Health, will be celebrating its 20th anniversary in October 2008. Over the past two decades, NIDCD-supported scientists have made astonishing inroads in our understanding of the institute's mission areas of hearing, balance, smell, taste, voice, speech, and language. Such discoveries have expanded our knowledge base and positioned researchers at the forefront of one of the most exciting periods in the history of our field.

Yet, just as the possibilities are great, the challenges have never been greater. For the past four years, NIDCD has received budget increases below the inflation level, leaving fewer and fewer dollars available for the funding of research. In response to these challenges, NIDCD has established forward-thinking programs to ensure that as many outstanding research proposals are funded as possible—from both experienced researchers as well as new investigators.

NIDCD staff have been working zealously with the research community to maintain a payline that is compatible with a vigorous research program supported largely by grants. At the National Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) Advisory Council meeting this past May, the automatic payline—the percent cutoff directly related to an applicant's priority score—for RO1 grant applications was the

21st percentile. In addition, 20 percent of available funds was sequestered for high program priorities.

To help new investigators in this increasingly competitive environment, NIDCD employs an expedited review process for first-time RO1 investigators and mentored career-development (K series) investigators. If an RO1 grant application receives a score, but does not fall within the automatic payline, the principal investigator is encouraged to submit a letter addressing the concerns raised at the initial review. If the letter addresses these concerns to the satisfaction of the NIDCD Advisory Council and NIDCD program staff, the grant application becomes a candidate for high program priority funds. In this way, the application is given a second chance during the same funding round, without the eight-month delay imposed by revision and resubmission.

NIDCD also maintains a robust individual pre- and post-doctoral fellowship program in which the time between a grant's submission and award is usually less than six months. This rapid turn-around makes it feasible for an applicant to revise and resubmit an application within a timeframe that fits a trainee's schedule.

During this period of level or declining budgets, NIDCD senior leadership, as well as program and review staff, will continue to work with the research community to try and meet your needs while maintaining a stellar portfolio of research grants. We also welcome your help as advisors and participants in the peer-review process.

JARO Update – August 2007



Debara L. Tucci, M.D.
Chair, Publications Committee

Ruth Anne Eatock, Ph.D.
JARO Editor-in-Chief

This report is submitted to update the membership on several issues related to the journal. JARO continues to grow and by many metrics continues to increase in prominence in the scientific community. The 2006 citation index again shows JARO as the number 1 journal for otolaryngology-related research. JARO has responded to recent increases in the numbers of submitted manuscripts by maintaining or increasing standards for acceptance and by publishing larger print issues to avoid backlogs. Manuscripts are now handled via an online submission system, Editorial Manager, which has increased efficiency. We appreciate member feedback on their experiences as we continue to work with the publisher, Springer, to improve the user interfaces. The journal is fiscally sound. The publishing agreement with Springer was signed seven years ago this month, and will remain in place for three additional years.

As publishing costs continue to increase, we have looked for ways to minimize this impact. In the Long Range Planning Committee questionnaire distributed to the membership after the 2007 Midwinter Meeting, we asked the membership to indicate a preference for journal format:

Which option is preferred?

1. Current option – both online and print versions, with increased costs of print passed on to the membership. Percent response = 19.4
2. Online version only (print version for libraries only). Percent response = 42.4
3. Online version with option of purchasing print for additional cost. Percent response = 38.1

Auditory Neuroscience Graduate Research Seminar

Amanda Clause arc38@pitt.edu
2008 Auditory Neuroscience Gordon-Kenan GRS Co-Chair

I am writing to you as co-chair of the 2008 Auditory Neuroscience Gordon-Kenan Graduate Research Seminar (GRS), which is associated with the Auditory System Gordon Research Conference (GRC) and will be held June 28-29 at Colby-Sawyer College, New Hampshire.

As you may know, the guiding principle of the Gordon Conferences is to encourage communication and discussion of ideas at the Frontiers of Science. Within this broader context the specific goal of the Auditory Neuroscience GRS is to bring together promising graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to present and discuss original research in a constructive and informal environment, providing the setting necessary to develop young researchers into competent scientific leaders poised to advance knowledge in the field of hearing science. In particular, a focus of the seminar is to create a more comprehensive perspective of the diverse aspects of basic and clinical auditory neuroscience by integrating research and ideas that stem from multiple levels of analysis. Accordingly, planned seminar topics range from the cellular/molecular and circuit mechanisms that underlie hearing in both normal and disordered

As a large majority of respondents indicated that they would be satisfied with an online-only journal, the Publications Committee recommended that this change be implemented, and the recommendation was accepted by the ARO Council. This will insure that basic subscription fees will not increase for 2008. Beginning in January 2008, members will receive an online subscription as part of their membership fees. Additional fees will be charged for a print subscription. These fees will be modest - \$15 for regular and honorary members, and \$10 for associate members.

Some concern was expressed at the Midwinter Meeting about the level of participation of non-U.S. investigators in the journal. A check showed that such concern was misplaced, in that the Journal receives a substantially greater percentage of non-U.S. manuscripts (51%) than the non-U.S. percentage of ARO members (28%).

Another issue that has been raised is open access. Members should be aware that *all members* have access to electronic copies of *all* manuscripts published in JARO by using the password made available through the ARO office. If you do not have your password, please contact: Darla Dobson at headquarters@aro.org. Some funding agencies require *open access* to publications within six months rather than the year that is now freely offered by Springer. Springer's present position is that open access at times under one year will cost authors \$3000 per article (their "open-choice" program). We will re-visit this issue with Springer.

Thanks to ARO members for continuing to support JARO by sending excellent manuscripts.

conditions, to higher auditory functions like sound localization, echolocation mechanisms, and cognitive aspects of hearing such as speech perception and language.

Individual seminars are sponsored in part by funds from the Gordon Research Conference organization. However, additional funds are required to support the participation of young investigators and students in this unique experience. Therefore we are seeking additional support from our colleagues who share an interest in auditory research. While any contribution would be greatly appreciated and will help maintain the scientific excellence that is the hallmark of the Gordon-Kenan Graduate Research Seminars, a donation of \$250-300 would support the registration, meals, and lodging for one attendee, while an additional \$800-1200 would provide a full sponsorship, including travel. If you are willing to contribute, please make your check payable to Gordon Research Conferences - Auditory Neuroscience GRS and mail directly to: Gordon Research Conferences, 512 Liberty Lane, West Kingston, RI 02892, USA.

I hope that you will be able to assist us in shaping the future direction of auditory neuroscience research by supporting this important meeting.

Call for Symposium and Workshop Proposals for ARO 2009 MidWinter Meeting



*John C. Middlebrooks, Ph.D.,
Chair, ARO Program Committee*

The ARO Program Committee is presently soliciting proposals for Symposia and Workshops for the 2009 MidWinter Meeting.

Symposia are organized as a series of oral presentations on a theme. Preference will be given to proposals that strive for novel syntheses across or within existing disciplines or explorations of new approaches that will expand research in new directions. Speakers from outside the usual ARO circle are encouraged insofar as they might contribute a novel perspective. Note that the ARO will reimburse coach-class travel expenses and will pay a small honorarium for non-ARO-member symposium and workshop speakers.

Workshops can be on topics of interest to a focused subgroup of ARO members or might focus on a particular technical innovation. Workshops often are scheduled for late afternoon or early evening.

The Program Committee encourages participation in symposia and workshops by non-U.S. scientists.

The proposals submission involves two steps: submission of a Letter of Intent followed by solicitation of a Formal Proposal. Letters of Intent are requested with a strict due date of **Monday, February 18, 2008, at 10:00 am**. The letter can be emailed (preferred) or hand-delivered to the Program Committee chairman or hand delivered to the ARO Registration desk at the 2008 MidWinter Meeting. Legible handwritten letters are acceptable. The late due date for proposals is intended to accommodate symposia that might arise from discussions in the first day or two of the MidWinter Meeting - earlier submission is encouraged if at all possible. The Letter of Intent should include:

- Name of the organizer with contact information, including email
- The session title
- A brief (<300) description of the theme and target audience.

Important ARO Dates

Abstract Submission Period: September 1-October 1, 2007

Travel Award Application Deadline: October 15, 2007

Pre-registration Deadline: January 11, 2008

MWM Hotel Room Rate Deadline: January 24, 2008

2008 MidWinter Meeting, Phoenix, AZ: February 16-21, 2008

2009 Symposia Letter of Intent Deadline: February 18, 2008

2009 Solicited Symposia Proposal Deadline: March 14, 2008

2009 MidWinter Meeting, Baltimore, MD: February 14-19, 2009

- A tentative list of speakers (4 to 7), with descriptive titles of their topics. Indicate whether each speaker has been contacted and agreed to participate. Not all speakers need to have committed at this point, although it is preferred that there have been at least informal contact.

The program committee will meet during the 2008 MidWinter Meeting to select the topics of interest. Then, formal proposals will be solicited. The formal proposals will include agreements to participate from all the speakers, brief preliminary abstracts for each talk, a time schedule, etc. Solicited formal proposals will be due on March 14, 2008. The Program Committee will evaluate the proposals shortly thereafter and will make the final selections. Note that the final abstract for each symposium or workshop talk will be due at the regular abstract submission time in September, 2008.

Send Proposals to:

John C. Middlebrooks

Kresge Hearing Research Institute, University of Michigan, 1301 E. Ann St., Ann Arbor, MI 48109-0506

Phone: 734-763-7965, FAX: 734-764-0014

Email: jmidd@umich.edu

E-mail is the preferred medium.

Biology of the Inner Ear (Woods Hole course)

Paul A. Fuchs, Ph.D.

2007-2008 ARO President-Elect

The Biology of the Inner Ear (BIE) laboratory/lecture course is in full-swing at the Marine Biology Laboratory at Woods Hole, MA. Course directors Janet Cyr, Jeff Corwin and Jeff Holt, and a host of willing associates (A. Forge, D. Fekete, M. Warchol, M. Kelley, G. Richardson, B. Kachar, J. Brigande, G. Geleoc, to name but a few) have constructed an outstanding series of lectures, discussions, laboratories and demonstrations to introduce a select group of 15 students to the mysteries of the inner ear. The first week was completed with extraordinary levels of enthusiasm and effort (the laboratory went dark after 2 a.m.!).



Photo was taken by Anh Nguyen-Huynh and shows Chris Magnus, Jeremie Barral, Shilpa Chatlani, Mark Berryman and Mark Warchol, moving from left to right.

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ARO Council

Photo by D. Lim



Pictured are: (L to R): John Middlebrooks, Steven Rauch, Karen Avraham, Peter Santi, Karen Steel, Robert Shannon, Paul Fuchs, Ashley Wackym, Laurel Carney, Lloyd Minor, David Lim

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2009 ARO MidWinter Meeting Save the Date!

Association for Research in Otolaryngology
32nd Annual MidWinter Meeting

February 14-19, 2009



The Baltimore Marriott Waterfront
Baltimore, MD, USA