A few months have passed, letting the 2002 MidWinter Meeting sink in. The meeting was excellent, thanks to the efforts of all those who came and made presentations and who organized symposia. It is ironic that the better and more smoothly a meeting runs, the easier it is to forget the excellent work of its organizers. The ARO has had an outstanding group of leaders. Richard Miyamoto, M.D., a pioneer in cochlear implantation, ably led the ARO as last year’s President and organized a symposium that documented the value of early intervention in the treatment of deafness. The Program Committee, with Robert Shannon as chair and the staff of Talley Management converted a list of abstracts into a meeting. Special thanks are due to Judy Dubno, Ph.D., the outgoing Past-President and former Secretary/Treasurer, and to Doug Cotanche, Ph.D., the outgoing Secretary/Treasurer for their exceptional commitment and service to the ARO. (Each has already been recruited to do more tasks for the ARO.)

The next midwinter meeting will be at the Adam’s Mark Hotel at Daytona Beach, Florida. While the move may take a bit of adjustment, there are many benefits. The facilities will accommodate everyone comfortably even when the weather is not perfect and there will not only be more space for exhibitors but even for some chairs near poster exhibits. Furthermore it gives scientists, clinicians and their families the opportunity to do some exploring outside the confines of their offices and labs.

By 1998 it was clear that the ARO had outgrown the Tradewinds Hotel and that it would be necessary to move. The ARO, too large for many hotels but not large enough for a convention center, sought a relatively low-priced meeting site at a beach. The Adam’s Mark Hotel in Daytona Beach is one of only two locations in all of Florida that met these needs. After three months of negotiations, the ARO signed a four-year contract with the Adam’s Mark Hotel on April 16, 1999. As you may know, after the ARO signed the contract with the Adam’s Mark Hotel, the hotel was sued for its alleged unfair treatment of guests over the Black College Reunion weekend in April 1999. In December 2001 the last of those suits was settled. The ARO was to have held its 2002 meeting at the Adam’s Mark but, because it was unclear that the addition to the building would be completed in time, the meeting remained at the Tradewinds for an additional year. The addition is now complete so the 2003 MidWinter Meeting will move to the Adam’s Mark Hotel in Daytona Beach.

Several airports serve Daytona Beach. The Daytona Beach International Airport (DBI) is closest, about a 15-minute cab ride from the Adam’s Mark Hotel. Both Delta and Continental fly into Daytona Beach International Airport. Two larger airports, Orlando Sanford International Airport (code SFB) and Jacksonville Airport can be reached with a 2-hour shuttle ride or in 1.5 hr. using a rental car. Delta will supply attendees flying in and out of Daytona or Orlando from the US, Bermuda, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean between February 19 and March 2, 2003 with a 5% discount (10% if reservations are made at least 60 days in advance). Information about Daytona Beach and about how to reach the Adam’s Mark Hotel is posted on the ARO web site, http://www.aro.org/mwm/2003meetinginfo.html.

Our organization has grown and the scientific presentations at the MidWinter Meeting have become not only more numerous but also more diverse and more interesting. It has been a privilege to serve as President of the ARO during this eventful year.

Donata Oertel, Ph.D.
President
Letter from the Editor

This is the second ARO Newsletter during my term as Editor, and I hope that you find its format familiar and its contents interesting. Photographs of members who write columns are now included. In addition to this newsletter, you will also receive E-News from the ARO to alert you of significant news items, and reminders of important ARO deadlines. The cover photograph shows the Adam’s Mark Hotel and highlights our move to Daytona Beach. In this issue and on the website we have made a special effort to provide information on the new meeting site.

Unfortunately, during the past year, four ARO members have died. Obituaries for these members can be found in this newsletter and on the website and include a special tribute to Earleen Elkins recognizing her numerous contributions to many ARO members for development of their research careers, and for the establishing of the NIDCD as a separate NIH institute.

Again, I welcome your suggestions and contributions to this newsletter. I would also like to thank Darla Dobson of Talley Management Company for her excellent assistance in producing this newsletter.

Peter Santi, Ph.D.
Editor

ARO 2002 Council

The 25th Annual Association for Research in Otolaryngology (ARO) MidWinter Meeting upheld ARO’s proud history of creating and advancing medical knowledge. The Presidential Symposium addressed “Early Developmental Processes.” The presentation was delivered by James F. Battey, M.D., Ph.D., director of NIDCD. Dr. Battey reviewed the exciting new developments in molecular genetics as they relate to hereditary hearing impairment. Dr. Allen F. Ryan presented new information in the controversial area of stem cell research as it relates to the auditory system. Dr. Patricia A. Leake reported new information on plasticity and refinement of projections in the auditory nervous system. Dr. Edwin W. Rubel discussed signals, cellular events and critical periods as they relate to auditory brainstem development. Dr. Gregory Ball provided a provocative discussion of developmental neuroplasticity related to vocal behavior in songbirds.

Finally, a team of Indiana University investigators consisting of Karen Iler Kirk, Ph.D., Mario Svirsky, Ph.D., and Derek Houston, Ph.D. presented a new body of research data, which has evolved from ongoing longitudinal research in cochlear implants in infants and children. Significant advances in speech perception, speech production and language have been documented. New measures have been developed to assess infants who are now cochlear implant recipients.

The 2002 ARO MidWinter Meeting

The Presidential Lecture was delivered by Award of Merit recipient, A. James Hudspeth, M.D., Ph.D. Dr. Hudspeth presented a discussion of his landmark contributions in mechanosensory hair cell transduction, regulation of ion channel expression and function, and pre-synaptic specializations.

Following the Presidential Symposium and Presidential Lecture the general scientific sessions were opened. The Program Organizing Committee chaired by Robert V. Shannon, Ph.D. masterfully performed the monumental task of arranging nearly 1,000 superb presentations into a broad range of symposia, platform presentations, and posters.

It was with a sense of nostalgia that the long sequence of excellent ARO meetings at the Tradewinds Resort came to a close. The ARO leadership and membership wishes to express our thanks to the Tradewinds for being our scientific home during the evolution of ARO into the largest and most influential Otolaryngologic research organization in the world.

A special word of thanks is extended to the ARO Council for guiding and overseeing our great organization and to all of our hard-working committee chairs and members. In addition, Talley Management has done a superb job in the executive office. Thanks and congratulations to JARO Editor, Eric Young and ARO Editor, Peter Santi for establishing our place in the publication world. Finally, the ongoing support of NIDCD is greatly appreciated.

Richard T. Miyamoto, M.D.
2001-2002 President

AAO-HNSF/ARO Research Forum
Call for Papers Deadline: January 8, 2003

The Research Forum, under joint sponsorship by the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Foundation and the ARO, will be held as part of the 2003 annual Academy meeting (9/21-24) in Orlando, Florida. Both oral and poster presentations are invited from residents or other investigators on any research topic related to otolaryngology. For full details on submission criteria and instructions, please refer to the Academy’s website. http://www.entnet.org

Pictured are: (top row, L to R): R. Shannon, W. Sewell, R. Miyamoto, D. Cotanche, and N. Kraus; (bottom row, L to R): D. Lim, D. Oertel, J. Dubno (not shown is P. Santi)
ARO 2002 Long Range Planning Committee Report

The purpose of the ARO Long Range Planning Committee is to help plan the future directions of the ARO by determining the opinions and priorities of its members. This is done by preparing MidWinter Meeting (MWM) pre- and post-meeting questionnaires, analyzing the results, and distributing relevant information to the ARO Council and various ARO committee chairs.

A total of 770 respondents completed the pre-meeting questionnaire, while an additional 168 respondents completed the post-meeting questionnaire. This represents a decrease in number of respondents compared with 2001. On the post-meeting questionnaire, 90% of respondents rated the overall meeting as “outstanding” or “excellent.” Among the scientific sessions, the Contributed Posters received the most “outstanding” or “excellent” ratings (74%), followed by Symposia (69%), and the Contributed Papers (58%). Of those who attended the Presidential Lecture, 83% rated it as “outstanding” or “excellent.” Several individuals expressed dissatisfaction with the move to Daytona, and concerns about airport accessibility and weather. Others commented that the increased space would improve the environment for the scientific program.

There was a specific question regarding ASHA and AAA continuing education units (CEUs) for meeting attendees. Twenty-two respondents (13%) expressed interest in receiving ASHA CEUs, while 13 (8%) wished to receive AAA CEUs. Four individuals were willing to serve on a CEU committee. The LRPC recommends that Council appoint a committee to set up ASHA CEU credit for audiologists attending ARO.

In the post-meeting questionnaire, sixty-five percent of respondents wanted the ARO to continue printing the Abstract Book, as well as making abstracts available on the website, while 34% would be satisfied with having abstracts available on the website only. Another important question dealt with changing the meeting format to eliminate Contributed Paper Podium Sessions. Only 12% of respondents wished to eliminate Contributed Paper Podium Sessions, 49.4% wished to have no change, and 37.5% wanted to increase the number of organized Symposia and reduce Contributed Paper Sessions.

Call for Symposium and Workshop Proposals for ARO 2004 MidWinter Meeting

The ARO Program Committee is presently soliciting proposals for Symposia and Workshops for the 2004 MidWinter Meeting. The deadline for proposals is February 7, 2003. Symposia and Workshops for the 2004 ARO Meeting will be selected by the ARO Program Committee when they meet during the 2003 ARO 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 techniques that will expand research in new directions. Workshops can be on topics of interest to a focused subgroup of ARO members, and may be scheduled in the evening.

Each proposal should include a title, a brief paragraph describing the organizing theme, a list of speakers and topics, and a brief description of each.

Please e-mail proposals before February 7, 2003 to Robert Shannon, Chair of the ARO Program Committee, at shannon@hei.org.

Robert V. Shannon, Ph.D.
Chair, Program Committee

ARO Symposia, Workshops and Special Events for 2003

Short Course
- Vestibular System 101: Introduction to Vestibular System Structure and Function for Non-Experts

Presidential Symposium
- Calyceal Synapses in the Brain Stem

Symposia
- Stem Cells and Progenitors: Identification, Isolation and Use
- Development of the Inner Ear: From Induction to Transduction
- Afferent Synaptic Transmission in the Cochlea
- The Functional Organization of the Auditory Cortex in Humans and Primates
- Auditory Learning: Principles, Applications and Mechanisms
- Tinnitus: Mechanisms, Models and Therapy

Workshops
- Cochlear Implants: Perception, Physiology and Models
- Morphology and Cell Biology of the Ear: Present and Future (Workshop in Honor of Norma Slepecky)

Special Events
- Issues in Animal Research
- How the Pay Line gets set: An insight into the NIH funding process

Congressman Strickland Receives ARO 2002 Distinguished Public Service Award

Congressman Strickland was our most recent guest of honor at our annual congressional reception at our meeting St. Petersburg. He received the ARO Presidential Citation from Dr. Rich Miyamoto for his continued support for increased funding for medical research. He is a Member of the House Commerce Committee which has direct jurisdiction over the amount of funding for NIH, and the NIDCD.

Congressman Strickland has been a strong supporter of the health care community having sponsored many measures to improve medical research and patient care.

John Williams
In Memoriam

David G. Hanson, M.D.

On July 10, 2002 David Hanson, 58, died of cancer at his home in La Porte, Indiana. Until his recent illnesses, Dr. Hanson had been Professor and Chairman of the Department of Otolaryngology-Head Neck Surgery at Northwestern University Medical School. He maintained an active laryngeal physiology laboratory that continued to produce numerous publications and helped train medical students, residents and fellows. During his chairmanship, Dr. Hanson revitalized the department’s research laboratories. He also recruited, encouraged and retained an excellent clinical faculty that forms the basis of today’s fine department. Dr. Hanson authored 85 original research papers and 12 invited articles and book chapters. He served on the editorial boards of seven specialty journals and saw many well-known performers who came to Chicago with voice problems. Dr. David Hanson has left his impact on the specialty of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, Northwestern’s department, and laryngeal and voice research. He will be missed by his many friends and colleagues.

Edward L. Applebaum, M.D.

Alfons Ruesch, Ph.D.

It is with great sadness that we note the death of Dr. Alfons Ruesch, on February 21, 2002, in Tuebingen, Germany, after a long illness. Alfons made enormous contributions to hearing cell research in the span of just seventeen years. At the University of Tuebingen, he quickly established himself at the leading edge of combined biophysical/genetic approaches to the inner ear. He showed that the hair cell transduction channel is neither a purinergic receptor nor the amiloride-sensitive epithelial sodium channel, and that thyroid hormone receptor is required for normal developmental acquisition of voltage-gated channels. Alfons helped to introduce zebrafish as a model system for inner ear function by functionally characterizing the first balance and hearing mutants. In 2001, he received his habilitation and a teaching award. That Alfons made such significant contributions to research and teaching while battling severe health problems attests to his strength of character. Those who had the pleasure of working with Alfons also recall with affection his unique blend of skepticism and modesty, of seriousness and warmth.

Ruth Anne Eatock, Ph.D.

Evan M. Relkin, Ph.D.

Evan M. Relkin, faculty member at the Institute for Sensory Research at Syracuse University, died on March 23, 2002 following an unfortunate skiing accident. At Syracuse, Evan’s research was primarily focused on the electrophysiology of the auditory nerve. Along with Denis Pelli at the Institute for Sensory Research, Evan produced a method for applying signal detection methods to data obtained from auditory nerve spike recordings. This allowed him, in the next few years to determine that 1) that the auditory nerve played only a very small role in behaviorally observed forward masking, and 2) that low-spontaneous rate neurons had a much slower recovery time than high-spontaneous rate auditory neurons. These and other findings were put to further use with people at Syracuse such as Jozef Zwislocki, Robert Smith, John Doucet, and Fan-Gang Zeng. He is survived by his wife Beth, and their two children, Lucas and Elena, who reside in New York, as well as his mother, Lillian Brookman and brothers Paul and Robert.

Christopher W. Turner, Ph.D.

Obituary and Tribute:

Earleen Feldman Elkins-Lebo (1933-2002)

Earleen Elkins, Ph.D., a long time member and friend of the ARO and retired career federal public servant died of a brain hemorrhage on January 16, 2002.

Photo by D. Lim

After receiving a Ph.D. in Audiology (Hearing Science) in 1967 from the University of Maryland, she took a position at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Washington, DC in 1968, where she engaged in research of the efficacy of devices for veterans suffering from hearing loss as a result of service in the Vietnam War.

Earleen made a career move to a position as Program Officer and Head of the Hearing Program in the Division of Communicative Disorders within the National Institute of Neurological Disease and Stroke in 1976. In 1986, she moved to the National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse of Health and assumed the position as Chief of Neurosciences in the Behavioral Research Branch, Division of Basic Research.

In 1988, upon the formation of the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communicative Disorders (NIDCD), she joined as a Deputy Director of Extramural Research. Many of those who were involved in establishing the NIDCD acknowledge the critical role she played in helping this important effort.

During her tenure at NIDCD, as Deputy Director and later as an Acting Director of the Division of Extramural Affairs, in these capacities she became a true friend of many young scientists in the field of communication disorders and helped to develop their careers. The majority of these young scientists are members of the ARO. Earleen retired in 1996.

She was on the faculty of the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences at the University of Maryland, where she taught audiology and statistics and mentored many graduate students.

She was an avid golfer and sports enthusiast. She is survived by her husband and close friend Jim Lebo, daughter Karen Moore, and sons Bob and Bill Elkins.

David Lim, M.D.

Historian
JARO Update

JARO is having a successful year. Two issues have been published with 8 and 9 papers. Three more issues have been filled, and will contain 11, 9, and 9 papers. Most of those papers are already on-line at the journal website: link.springer.de/link/service/journals/10162/contents/tfirst.html. So far, the journal has received 41 new manuscripts this year (since January 2002). Counting some older manuscripts still in revision, there are 36 manuscripts under review at present. Papers are appearing on-line about 70 days after acceptance. Currently, new manuscripts can appear in print in the second issue of volume 4, due out in June 2003. We are working to reduce the latency to print by expanding the size of the next few issues. Please support your society journal by sending us your papers.

Eric D. Young, Ph.D.
JARO Editor-in-Chief

ARO members were invited to present their research at the Nobel Conference “To Restore Hearing” in June, 2002. The meeting was organized by Mats Ulfendahl, Ake Flock, and Ilmari Pykkö of the Karolinska Institutet and took place at the Krusenberg Herrgard conference center near Stockholm.

Upcoming ARO MidWinter Meetings

Year Dates
2003 February 23 - 27
2004 February 22 - 26
2005 February 27 - March 3
2006 February 26 - March 2
2007 February 25 - March 1

Location
Adam’s Mark Daytona Beach Resort
Daytona Beach, Florida

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Photo by R. Shannon
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Detailed map of the new location for the ARO meeting at the Adam’s Mark Hotel

Overview map of the new location for the ARO meeting with attractions listed
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