



THE FLORIDA UROLOGIST

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President's Message

Why do I belong? That is a question I used to frequently ask myself when I first arrived in Florida over a decade ago to launch my urological career. During my first year of practice, I joined the Florida Urological Society (FUS) at the recommendation of my senior colleagues (Norman Block, Victor Politano, Hernan Carrion), who pointed out that belonging to a specialty society not only has benefits for the individual, but for the group as a whole. By being an active member of the FUS, I have been able to keep up with the changes in medicine over the last 10 years, and have learned about many things, including socioeconomic issues pertaining to practice management, coding and reimbursement, tort reform efforts, and malpractice insurance issues to name just a few.

Initially, I thought that many of these subjects were of little concern to me as I was "protected" in the cocoon of the University setting. As I soon found out, by participating early and often, we are all in this together and there is no sanctuary. The FUS has provided an excellent platform for discussion, activism and education. It is not merely a political entity, but more importantly **FOR ME** it has become an important way to meet and discuss urological issues with my colleagues throughout the state. In addition, due to the marriage of the FUS and the Florida and Puerto Rican residency training programs, it has become an important and stimulating opportunity for our younger urologists in training to share ideas about the outstanding research going on within the borders of this vast state. It also provides them with opportunities to engage in stimulating debates and presentations, all items that have made the *FUS Annual Meeting* as much about science and medicine as it has traditionally been about political activism and networking. Due to the hard work of my predecessors, our membership is large and strong due and our voice, on important issues relevant to all urologists, is heard on the state, regional and even national levels. Several current members, including a few former past presidents of our distinguished society, have been and continue to be influential.

On the State level, Terrance Regan, MD is on Florida's Carrier Advisory Committee (CAC). Each Medicare Carrier has a Carrier Advisory Committee composed of physicians from each specialty. These physicians are appointed by their State Chapter and volunteer their time to review and comment on all proposed Medicare policies, and in Terry's case, *especially*, those that pertain to urology to make sure that Medicare coverage policies are fair and reasonable. On a regional level, B. Thomas Brown, MD, is the Chair of the Judicial and Ethics Committee for the SESAUA, and is also past president of FUS and SESAUA. Martin K. Dineen, MD is the chair of the Health Policy Council for SESAUA.

We are well represented on a national level as well, as Jeffrey Dann, MD, is the Chair of the AUA's coding and reimbursement committee and last year, Ronald D. Castellanos, MD, who has



Raymond Leveillee, MD

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Increase the Strength of our Association!

Do you know of a colleague who should join the Florida Urological Society?
Just call the FUS office at (847) 517-7249 or visit our website at www.flaurological.org!

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practiced urology for more than 30 years, became the first Urologist to serve on the influential Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC). MEDPAC is an independent federal body established by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 with a broad mandate: to advise the U.S. Congress on issues affecting the Medicare program. It is also tasked with analyzing access to care, quality of care, and other issues affecting Medicare.

Our annual meeting this past Labor Day, directed by past President Tom Stringer, MD at the ChampionsGate resort in Orlando was a great success! I cannot thank Tom enough for his superlative guidance and for doing such a wonderful job holding the reigns this past year. The meeting was extremely well attended, family oriented and scientifically "State-of-the-Art" thanks to the hard work of many individuals. Extra-special credit should be directed to Vinny Bird, MD who was in charge of setting the tone and theme for the scientific sessions. The vision for next years meeting will be guided by Rafael Carrion, MD who will act as the Scientific Chairman. We plan a broad-based program, with a particular emphasis on men's health issues. Drs. Tom Lue and Mike Moran are among the anticipated guests from out of state. We will keep you all posted as the sessions become finalized and commitments are firmed up.

My wife, Tracy, and I hope that we can have your participation for next year's annual meeting, which will be held in the fabulous resort location of Miami Beach. The venue is the Loewe's South Beach (So-Be) located in the heart of the "American Riviera." It promises to be a great time for everyone, including those with athletic aspirations (annual Golf and Tennis Tournaments, deep-sea fishing charters), those who desire middle and high-end shopping (locally and with excursions planned for Bal Harbour shops and Aventura Mall), gastronomie marvels (the resort is one block from Lincoln Road and multiple unique restaurants and nightclubs) or those who wish to just relax at the spa and oceanfront pool!!! Please join us as we welcome our president-elect Bob Newman to his first day on the job.

I want to close by saying how truly honored I am to be representing the over 70% of Urologists in this state as the FUS president for 2006-2007. As many of you know, the FUS has well over 500 members and is larger than several of the AUA sections! This year, the Southeastern Section has the opportunity to nominate the person who will take over as AUA President for the 2008-2009 term, with the voting taking

place at the termination of the Annual Meeting, held in Orlando in the spring. At this time, the two candidates are both old friends of the FUS, Anton "Tony" Buschen, MD (Alabama) and current AUA Treasurer Bill Gee, MD (Kentucky). We encourage FUS members to come out in force and make every effort to attend and vote for this extremely important office. Since the meeting is being held on our soil the opportunity exists to have our national representative be selected from a majority of Urologists from the State of Florida. This may ultimately help shape the direction of the AUA in the future and is a tremendous responsibility. Nomination letters are being accepted until December 31st. Further inquiries should be directed to SESAUA President Ed Janosko, MD (<http://www.sesaua.org/about/nominationletter.aspx>)

Please feel free to contact me either by phone at (305) 243-4562 or by cell at (786) 282-1018. My e-mail address is rlevell@med.miami.edu. We will continue the tradition of an interim FUS board meeting at the annual SESAUA meeting March 8-11, 2007, at the Dolphin resort in Orlando.

It is my honor and privilege to serve as your President for 2006-2007. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further service.

Past President's Message

Thomas Stringer, MD



The 2006 annual meeting of the FUS was a resounding success a result of the combined efforts of our management and leadership team, record breaking industry participation, membership attendance, a high quality scientific program and the graciousness of our Omni hosts. Although we briefly flirted with the possibility of a hurricane impact, the weather was thankfully not a major issue.

The goal of our organization is to provide recognizable value in the form of education and political strength to all Florida urologists. This applies to year-long efforts on behalf of our members that culminated in the carefully constructed annual meeting. We had a total of 32 presentations by 21

2007 Florida Urological Society Board of Directors

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invited speakers, who were all rated highly on attendee evaluations. Once again, excellent and pertinent scientific and socioeconomic education was provided. I am grateful to my Florida colleagues and residents that participated as well as our out-of-state speakers. The administrators meeting was well attended and also characterized by high quality and timely presentations.

Two years ago we established the financial goal of building and stabilizing the reserve account of the FUS. This was accomplished by careful attention to overhead costs, membership growth and sustained efforts to obtain wide industry support. As a result of these efforts, including record-breaking industry participation, our overall financial position is a historical best. With our management team, we will continue to explore the development of new revenue sources and services, including industry collaboration through an inaugural corporate membership program.

Our new President, Ray Leveillee, is dedicated to strengthening our industry relationships, preserving our professional integrity and providing a solid educational foundation for our organization. It is up to all of us, as members, to promote and support the FUS. Participation is the key, including attendance at the SESUA Annual Meeting March 8-11, 2007. We will have the opportunity to elect the President-Elect of the AUA at the business meeting on Sunday.

Again, my sincere appreciation is extended to all of you in our great organization for your support and the honor of serving you as President.

Florida Medicare Report

Terrence C. Regan, MD

This is a letter to provide you with a summary of the last two meetings of the Florida Medicare Carrier Advisory Committee, in which two specific issues have been raised that are pertinent to urology.

The first is in regard to proton beam therapy for prostate cancer. As you may be aware, a new proton beam accelerator has been constructed in Jacksonville, Florida, and I believe is part of the Shands Jacksonville facility. This center has opened and they have requested certain diseases be covered for treatment by the First Coast Services, the Medicare carrier here in the State of Florida. One of the diagnoses that they would like to cover is prostate cancer. You may have already reviewed the literature in regards to proton beam therapy and prostate cancer. Certainly it appears, from my review of the literature, that proton beam therapy is an acceptable treatment for prostate cancer. There is a theoretical advantage in that there will be less tissue injury to surrounding organs. However, a clear benefit over other treatment options, from radical prostatectomy in its various forms, to IMRT, radioactive seed implantation and cryosurgery, is not clear. To my knowledge, there have been no randomized trials between any of these treatment options. At the last meeting of the Florida Urologic Society, the radiation oncologist intimated to us that there appeared to be no clear evidence that proton beam therapy was superior to IMRT at this time. Certainly, as the data on proton beam therapy is accumulated, we may determine whether its effectiveness and/or side effect profile is superior to other treatments that are currently offered for prostate cancer. The cost of proton beam therapy can be up to three times as expensive as IMRT. Needless to say, the carrier wants to make sure that the patients treated with proton beam therapy are appropriate patients. We have tried to help them establish guidelines in this regard.

The second issue regards a new treatment for urinary stress incontinence. Renessa therapy is reported to be a minimally-invasive office treatment for stress urinary incontinence. Essentially, it is a radiofrequency treatment of the female urethra, which apparently leads to increased resistance with improvement of stress incontinence. This is a very promising treatment, but at this time, we feel that the Florida Urologic Society cannot have an opinion on this treatment

until additional information is submitted to see if it is sufficient to support criteria of the American Medical Association for a level 1 code. Renessa appears to be a promising treatment, but at the present time, it will be on the list of non-covered services. If the evidence shows that this is a valuable treatment, First Coast Services will bring it up for review again for consideration of coverage.

One of the interesting things that I believe is happening with the Carrier Advisory Committee is that the medical product and service industries are bypassing the state specialty societies and going directly to the carrier to try to gain coverage for whatever service, procedure and or instrumentation that they may provide. Certainly, this is well within their legal right, but often times their requests catch the specialty services unaware and we are asked to provide information for the carrier about the appropriateness of coverage. As the carrier advisory representative, I can review literature with them, but ultimately, it is the carrier's decision as to whether they want to provide coverage for any particular service. I think that all specialty services are becoming acutely aware that there is a limited dollar amount to provide Medicare coverage. I think that all the specialty services, including urology, are concerned about having appropriate financial resources to cover services to Medicare beneficiaries. I also think that they are taking an active role to advise the carrier to cover those services that are essential or clearly show significant benefit for the beneficiary. In order for services that are marginal or controversial to become a covered service, further data, which shows significant benefit, must be provided.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask.

Interesting Times - MEDPAC Report

Ronald D. Castellanos, MD

Our last MedPac meeting was Wednesday, November 10, 2006-Thursday November 11, 2006 (a day after elections). We met in Washington, D.C. with House staff and Senate staff members on Thursday for breakfast. Needless to say, there has been a lot of "changes" on Capital Hill and regretfully, there is a fair amount of uncertainty at this time. We expect that Congress won't do anything until after the 1st of the year and then "hopefully" come up with a temporary fix to the mandated 5.1% cut effective January 1, 2007. Sometime in 2007 we are all hoping for a permanent fix to the Medical Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR).

MedPac has a congressional mandate to report on SGR due March 2007. There has been a lot of discussion and recommendations for "long term" changes to the medical delivery system, which links payment policy and quality initiative. No recommendation has been made, but there has been a lot of discussion to date.

There has been some discussion on the Least Costly Alternative (LCA) policy as it applies to LH-RH, incident to therapy. Hopefully we will be able to get national directive to eliminate the inconsistencies of this policy across the various carriers.

We all need to recognize and be proud of our AUA Health Policy Staff under Dr. Jim Regan's direction. They do an outstanding job for all of us. Their unselfish and dedicated hard work really has paid off for all of us. I don't ever want to hear "the AUA doesn't do any for me." In my opinion they are "unsung heroes." There are a lot of people (AUA members and staff) working on your behalf to help you and to benefit Urology.

I hope to keep all of you informed about MedPac (Medicare Payment Advisory Committee). We advise Congress on Medicare issues. We also deal with the CMS and the Secretary of Health and Human Services (Mike Levitt) on issues.

2006 Midterm Elections: New Faces in the Florida Congressional Delegation

By Sam Shepard, AACU Director of Health Policy

The recent elections have turned the tide in Washington, D.C. and it is clear that overarching political issues such as Iraq commandeered the national debate. Corruption and a desire for change, in addition to Iraq, have essentially stolen the limelight from some of the major healthcare issues that urologists in Florida – and across the country – have been concerned about. Fixing the Medicare Physician Payment Formula (SGR), comprehensive national medical liability reform and protection of in-office diagnostic imaging are still critical issues that Florida urologists care about. How they will be dealt with in the new Democrat controlled Congress has yet to be determined.

Florida urologists didn't feel the same sea change in their congressional districts that other parts of the country felt, especially the Northeastern and the Midwest. Florida seats did turn over, but out of 25 congressional districts there were turnovers in only five of them – and one of those was Mark Foley's. Here is a quick spin around some of the new members of the Florida Congressional Delegation, their take on healthcare and their potential priorities as they take their seats in the 110th Congress. As always, go to www.aacuweb.org to find your member of Congress.

Vern Buchanan, R-13-FL

The 13th Florida Congressional District runs from just below Tampa Bay to Charlotte Harbor, north of Fort Myers.

Vern Buchanan is an automobile dealer who successfully out-campaigned Democrat Christine Jennings for this open seat, which was vacated by Republican Katherine Harris in her scandal-plagued failed bid to unseat Bill Nelson in the Senate. Buchanan had a tough campaign in a clearly mixed area. His close ties to Governor Jeb Bush and US Senator Mel Martinez no doubt helped his efforts. Buchanan has been a firm believer in liability reform and appears to support innovation in the area of electronic medical records.

Gus Bilirakis, R-9-FL

The 9th Florida Congressional District covers part of the area north of St. Petersburg and north and east of Tampa.

Gus Bilirakis is the son of Mike Bilirakis, the 12-term congressman who served on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Bilirakis, whose law practice focused on elder law, pointed to his health care credentials during this election – appealing to a wide senior voting base. During his four terms in the Florida House, he spearheaded legislation supporting community health care centers that treat the uninsured. He called for expanding tax incentives for health savings accounts and for low-to-middle-income families who purchase private health care coverage.

Kathy Castor, D-11-FL

The 11th Florida Congressional District is centered on Tampa and was the democratic open seat Rep. Jim Davis left to seek the governorship. **Rep. Davis was forced to give up his seat to run for governor. He lost the gubernatorial race to Florida Attorney General Charlie Crist.** Kathy Castor's mother, Betty, ran an unsuccessful campaign for the US Senate when Bob Graham stepped down. She subsequently lost to Mel Martinez, who just recently announced that he would be heading the Republican National Committee (he still keeps his senate seat). Daughter Kathy, who has been involved in the county commission, as well in Hillsborough County, has had a tough primary. In D.C., affordable health care figures continue to be a legislative priority for Castor,

who focused on the protecting the local indigent from being forced into HMO's while she was a member of the local county commission.

Ron Klein, D-22-FL

The 22nd Florida Congressional District covers most of the Atlantic oceanfront in Palm Beach and Broward Counties, stretching from Jupiter in Palm Beach County to Fort Lauderdale in Broward County.

In one of the year's most expensive House races in the country, Ron Klein knocked off 13-term Republican Rep. Clay Shaw, who was next in line to chair the House Ways and Means Committee in a GOP-controlled Congress. Shaw, who has previously won elections, sat in one of 18 Republican-held districts that Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry carried in 2004. Klein's war chest, and he was a prodigious fundraiser with ties to numerous lobbyists, enabled him to respond to many attacks. Klein turned one of the incumbent's primary assets – Shaw's seniority – against him by charging that Shaw, a former chairman of the Social Security Subcommittee, had let down the district's numerous senior citizens by supporting a Medicare prescription drug bill that prevents the government from negotiating lower drug prices. Since Klein has attacked the Medicare Part D program because of his constituency, it remains to be seen whether he will be open to understanding the health care system from a provider's point of view.

Tim Mahoney D-16-FL

The 16th Florida Congressional District stretches from the Atlantic almost to the Gulf of Mexico; it is one of the most oddly designed districts in the nation.

In the district of Republican Rep. Mark Foley, the disgraced former lawmaker who was responsible for the congressional page scandal that dominated the headlines this fall, Tim Mahoney took advantage of public outrage to capture the seat. Joe Negron gained on Mahoney in the five-week sprint to Election Day, using the slogan, "Punch Foley for Joe." But Mahoney — a fundamentalist Christian, a former Republican who opposes abortion, gun control, and same-sex marriage, and a successful businessman — was a palatable candidate to disillusioned Republicans who may have been reluctant to choose Foley's name on the ballot.

Resident's Corner

I have attended the Florida Urologic Society Annual Meeting on three occasions and have enjoyed several facets of the meetings. Talking with residents from other programs and comparing surgical approaches, clinical responsibilities and other factors has allowed me to see a different approach to Urology that I would not have otherwise been exposed to. I was able to "network," and talk to several people regarding job opportunities. In addition, I had the chance to present in several of the residents' sessions and win the coveted Wise Old Owl (and get to take it home and relive the glory). Finally, spending time at a wonderful resort with my beautiful wife, Rosie, (leaving the kids with my mother-in-law) is an unparalleled treat during residency. All in all, I think that the FUS annual meeting is a wonderful opportunity for residents to get to know peers, meet prospective colleagues and spend some downtime that they will long remember.



Yekutiel (Siel) Sandman, MD
University of Miami

The 2006 FUS meeting in Orlando was a valuable experience for the urology residents in attendance. In addition to participating in the Pyelogram Hour and the Resident Debates, the FUS had an outstanding scientific program with world-renowned experts speaking on a variety of topics. Additionally, the FUS allows residents invaluable networking opportunities by meeting other urologists throughout the state of Florida. For those residents who are interested in practicing in Florida once training is complete, the FUS offers a wealth of opportunities. I would definitely attend future FUS meeting and recommend it to my colleagues as well.

Brian Cohen, MD
University of Miami

Congratulations to our 2006 Award Winners!

Resident Debate

- 1st Shawn West, MD
- 2nd Carl Biscoff, MD
- 3rd Brian Cohen, MD

Resident Pyelogram Hour

- 1st Theodore Brisson, MD
- 2nd Arturo Cohen, MD
- 3rd Carl Biscoff, MD

International Volunteers in Urology, Inc.

Are you a resident or fellow looking to gain urology experience internationally? The International Volunteers in Urology (IVU) Traveling Resident Scholarship Program provides opportunities for residents and fellows to spend from one to four weeks in a developing country with an IVU mentor urologist. Since 1999, IVU has sent their Traveling Resident Scholarship recipients to numerous countries, including Haiti, Vietnam, India, Tanzania, Cameroon, Honduras, Mexico and Peru. The residents perform surgery under supervision, learn about limitations in surgical and medical options, and sometimes teach didactic sessions on topics that they have studied in the United States. Depending on the site that the resident rotates to, he or she may participate in open stone surgery, benign prostate surgery, hypospadias repairs, and incontinence procedures.

If you are interested in being part of this program, please visit International Volunteers in Urology, Inc., online at www.ivumed.org, where applications and scholarship information are available.

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We look forward to their
continued support!***

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Have you visited our website? The FUS continues to improve communication, including expansion of the capabilities and content of our website.

All Annual Meeting information appears on the website in an easily downloadable and printable version. This allows society members to take advantage of the speed of web publishing.

We hope you will take an increased interest in using the website and offering us your input on ways we can make it even more beneficial to all members. You are able to instantly get all types of membership information on the site, as well as printing out registration forms for meetings, abstract submission forms, and more.

If you haven't visited the site recently, be sure to do so soon and visit regularly!

Address Corrections Requested

Please notify the FUS of any changes in your contact information, including change of address, phone or fax numbers, and e-mail address. This information is only disseminated to the membership and is used for networking, one of our primary missions. Thank you!



Miami



Mark Your Calendars!

FUS 2007 Annual Meeting
August 30 – September 2, 2007
Loews Miami Beach Hotel
Miami Beach, Florida



A spouse tries out equipment at Intuitive's exhibit booth at the 2006 FUS Annual Meeting.



Florida Urological Society

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