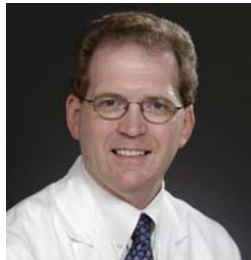


## Letter from the President



Dear Fellow ARO Member:

The ARO is thriving as an organization. Our membership is growing and the number of

abstracts presented at the MidWinter Meeting continues to increase. As has been previously reported, we are pleased that the 2006 MidWinter Meeting will be held at the Fairmont in New Orleans from February 11 – February 15. Please note that the schedule for the meeting will be one day in advance of the schedule for previous MidWinter Meetings. The Presidential Symposium will be on the morning of Saturday, February 11, and the last session will end at noon on Wednesday, February 15. This change in schedule was necessary in order to secure the meeting rooms that we need at the Fairmont.

We are able to return to New Orleans because the ARO and the Pyramid Management Group reached a settlement in the lawsuit concerning the ARO's previous multi-year contract with the Adam's Mark Hotel (now the Daytona Beach Hilton). This settlement releases the ARO from any obligation to return to that hotel for future meetings. The ARO is making payments to the Pyramid Group as a part of this settlement. The monetary settlement will substantially deplete the financial reserves of the ARO. This settlement may involve short-term financial sacrifice for the organization, but it will also allow the ARO to be in meeting locations that are much better suited to the membership's needs. Possible meeting locations for 2007 and beyond are now being considered. All of these topics will be discussed at the business meeting that is open to all ARO members on Sunday, February 12, 2006.

The ARO needs to increase its reserves in order to insure its future. We initiated a campaign to raise funds for the ARO's reserve fund in April. The generosity of those donors who have given to the ARO is

being recognized on the ARO Website. Your participation is encouraged. Information about making a contribution is available on the website [www.aro.org](http://www.aro.org).

The ARO Council has approved an increase in ARO membership dues and in registration fees for the MidWinter meeting. Regular membership dues will increase to \$120 (currently \$110). Regular member meeting registration will increase to \$150 (currently \$95). Regular non-member meeting registration will increase to \$275 (currently \$235). Associate (student) membership dues and registration fees will remain the same. Even with these modest increases in membership dues and registration fees for regular members, ARO dues and fees are still less than comparable organizations in our field.

The decision to increase membership dues and registration fees for regular members was not an easy one for the Council. The organization has always kept its operating expenses to a minimum and has maintained a fee structure that has been considerably less than the vast majority of other scientific societies. The increases are essential to insure the health and stability of the ARO.

### The Journal of the Organization

Dr. Eric Young has announced his intention to step down as editor of the *Journal of the Association for Research in Otolaryngology*. Under Dr. Young's leadership, *JARO* has become a successful and highly respected journal. The impact factor of *JARO* measured 2.316 this year (up from 2.086 in 2003). The time and effort that Eric has devoted to *JARO* have been integral to its success and impact. ARO is very fortunate that Eric directed his intellect and focus to establishing a journal with scientific rigor and consistency. Dr. Art Popper, Dr. Jerry Popelka, and members of the Publications Committee have solicited nominations for the position of *JARO* editor and are in the process of considering the candidates.

### 2006 MidWinter Meeting

The Program Committee under the leadership of Dr. Robert Shannon and now being led by Dr. John Middlebrooks has assembled an impressive group of symposia for the 2006 MidWinter Meeting, the titles of which are as follows: "Molecular Biology of Ear Development From Molecules to Application", "Efferent Innervation of Hair Cell Systems", "Imaging Protein-Protein Interactions", "Toll-like Receptors", "Activity Dependent Plasticity in the Auditory Brainstem", and "Adult-Onset Hearing Loss: What's the Damage?". The 2006 Presidential Symposium will be held on the morning of Saturday, February 11 and is entitled, "Vestibular Mechanisms: Achieving Balance in the Ear". The presidential symposium will cover basic vestibular physiology from the inner ear to central pathways and behavior. Synergies between basic science and clinical investigation will be discussed.

The MidWinter Meeting continues to be the highlight of the ARO. On-line abstract submission will begin on September 1 and will end on October 1, 2005. The exchange of ideas at the poster sessions, podium sessions, and symposia establish the enormous value of the meeting. Our review of the post-meeting questionnaire after the 2005 MidWinter meeting indicated that most people were very positive about the meeting facilities, the hotel, and the city. These important elements are all critical to the success of the meeting. We are fortunate that the Fairmont in New Orleans was eager to have us back for the 2006 meeting with room rates that are comparable to those for 2005.

The ARO Council will continue to work towards the planning of outstanding meetings in facilities that are affordable and that meet the needs of the membership.

Lloyd B. Minor, M.D.  
ARO President

## The 2005 ARO MidWinter Meeting



The twenty-eighth annual MidWinter Meeting of the Association for Research in Otolaryngology took place February 19-24,

2005. The New Orleans Fairmont Hotel proved a good impedance match for the ARO and, to paraphrase president-elect Bob Shannon, “the organization received a needed buzz”.

The numbers tell part of the story. The vitality of the ARO and New Orleans’ reputation as a convention city resulted in a record 1602 registrants (130 more than last year). Anticipating an increased number of attendees 19 exhibitors (5 more than 2004) were present. The meeting location in New Orleans was judged as “outstanding” or “excellent” by 58% of the 421 respondents to the post-meeting questionnaire.

The Program Committee under its former Chair, Bob Shannon, performed the difficult task of organizing 1065 contributed and invited abstracts into thoughtful and coordinated poster and podium sessions. They also scheduled a record number of symposia and workshops. The scientific program began Saturday evening with a workshop on Gene Microarray Technology. There were also workshops on Sunday and Monday evening covering NIDCD Research and Training for New Investigators and Congenital Cytomegalovirus-Induced Hearing Loss: Who Needs to Know? The Presidential Symposium on Sunday morning was devoted to the structure and function of biological membranes. Five outstanding scientists described lipid-protein interactions that are at the heart of many sensory, developmental, neuronal and pharmacological events. Membrane-based cell signaling contributes to Planar Cell Polarity and Stereocilia Bundle Development which was the topic of one of the Sunday afternoon symposia. Other symposia at the meeting covered auditory pathways, cochlear implants, gap junctions, music and the brain, neuroethology, brain slices, and middle ear biomechanics. The symposium on ‘Hereditary Hearing Loss: From Humans to Mice and Back’ moderated by Drs S. Merchant, M. C. Liberman and E. Keithley received considerable attention. Despite the high

quality of the symposia and workshops the podium and poster sessions continued to be the heart and the soul of the meeting. The internet café has become a tradition. It is a place of lively interaction whether “virtually” or with folks across the table.

Late Tuesday afternoon Edwin W. Rubel gave the Presidential Lecture entitled “Gone Fishing; Can We Hook the Modulators of Hair Cell Survival in Zebrafish Lateral Line?” It demonstrated that his laboratory is going strong and has no shortage of projects or ideas. The lecture was followed by the Awards & Honors Ceremony in which Ed received the 2005 Award of Merit. His colleagues provided a moving and often graphically entertaining narration on his life style and how it dovetailed with his contributions to developmental neurobiology.

It was apparent from the presentations that the research enterprise benefited from the generosity of the NIH/NIDCD, Deafness Research Foundation, The National Organization for Hearing Research, American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Foundation, Medtronic Xomed and American Academy of Audiology/American Academy of Audiology Foundation.

In addition to the exciting science we all had the opportunity to explore the exotic city of New Orleans which is appropriately nicknamed ‘The Big Easy.’ In the evenings we were entertained right in the hotel by our own Chuck Berlin. Did I mention the food? In summary, the twenty-eighth ARO meeting was a great combination of state of the art scientific research, reasonable midwinter weather and great social and culinary delights.

For me personally the New Orleans meeting made all the hassles that council and I had in getting there worthwhile. The city is not a permanent home for the ARO. The membership’s response in the post-meeting questionnaire indicated that they would like to rotate between different meeting locations. A two year lead time is desirable in order to optimize meeting organization and membership attendance. We need to get in the mode of deciding on a meeting location site two years in advance.

Our meeting in New Orleans would not have come about were it not for the support and hard work of many people. The wisdom and leadership of Council guided the decision to hold the 2005 MidWinter meeting at the Fairmont Hotel in New Orleans. We were able to move at practically the last possible moment because of the able assistance of our management firm (notably our Meetings Manager, Lisa Astorga, and our Executive Director, Darla Dobson). An *ad hoc* cite selection committee consisting of Bob Shannon, Charlie Liberman, myself and Lisa Astorga visited potential meeting venues and Council made the final decision. Bob Shannon, Lisa Astorga and the program committee had more than the usual stress of organizing the meeting at a new location. My thanks to Bob, Darla, Lisa and all our Council members for their service during a stressful transition period.

*William E. Brownell, Ph.D.*  
*2004-2005 ARO President*

*Photo by D. Lim*



*2005 Award of Merit Recipient, Edwin Rubel*

*Photo by D. Lim*



*Dr. Charles Berlin and band perform at the 2005 MidWinter Meeting.*

## Letter from the Editor



It has been a pleasure to serve as the ARO Editor for two terms (six years). Since this may be my last newsletter column, I would like to take the opportunity to thank those individuals who made the job of ARO Editor possible and enjoyable. First, I would like to thank the previous editor, Dr. Gerald Popelka, who transformed ARO from paper to digital publications. Under difficult circumstances, the 2001 MidWinter meeting was made possible by the outstanding efforts of President Dr. Judy Dubno and Program Chair Dr. Mario Ruggero. The next Program Committee Chair, Dr. Robert Shannon, was instrumental in our selection of a new abstract processing system, which has evolved into a reliable and efficient system for ARO. The Program Committee and Lisa Astorga of Talley have consistently done excellent work putting together the program for the MidWinter meetings. Darla Dobson of Talley has also greatly improved the ARO website and now she expertly manages all of the ARO office functions. The ARO has successfully matured from a member volunteer organization to a professional scientific society.

*Peter A. Santi, Ph.D.*  
ARO Editor

## ARO Contributors

ARO gratefully acknowledges support from the following contributors.

*\* indicates ARO Council Member*

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For information on submitting a contribution, please visit the ARO website. <http://www.aro.org>.

## Association for Research in Otolaryngology

**29<sup>th</sup> Annual  
MidWinter Meeting  
February 11-15, 2006**

The Fairmont Hotel  
New Orleans, LA, USA

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

*Please note change of meeting start  
day to Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>.*

## ARO Council

*Photo by D. Lim*



*Pictured are: (top row, L to R): J. Middlebrooks, A. Wackym, D. Cotanche, K. Steele, P. Santi, E. Monsell; (bottom row, L to R): D. Lim, R. Shannon, L. Minor, W. Brownell, E. Keithley, S. Rauch*

## ARO 2005 Long Range Planning Committee Report: Location was a Hot Topic at the ARO 2005 MidWinter Meeting



Location, Location, Location: that was on people's minds at the 2005 MidWinter meeting (aside from science, of course). As determined by the post-meeting questionnaire, 58% of the 421 respondents judged the meeting location in New Orleans as "outstanding" or "excellent" compared to a dismal 20% approval rating of Daytona Beach in 2004. A typical response to the question "What do you like MOST about this year's meeting?" was: "New Orleans" or "It was not in Daytona Beach."

Hotel accommodations also received a higher ranking for this year compared to last (48% vs. 24% in the "outstanding" or "excellent" categories). Despite this improved approval rating, members expressed some disappointment in the service and catering provided by the Fairmont Hotel. The membership would like to see faster check-in service, better room/cleaning service, and the availability of less expensive food. Members also noted that the coffee and water containers were not replenished adequately and there were a few hopeful respondents calling for free beer! Of the 90% respondents that plan to attend the 2006 MidWinter Meeting, only 65% planned to stay at the Fairmont Hotel. In that regard, 74% of the respondents indicated that they would like to have the meeting site alternate between different cities. Many members took the opportunity to suggest different locations. While a few members suggested skiing resorts and major urban settings, the majority indicated a preference for the beach or warm climates. Convenience to an international airport is important to our overseas attendees and some members requested family-friendly destinations.

While we are by no means unified in our opinion about the specific location for future meetings, there did appear to be agreement on one issue: the scientific value of the meeting. Seventy-five percent of the membership ranked the scientific content of the meeting as "outstanding" or "excellent". Posters, ranked by 72% of the respondents in the "outstanding" or "excellent" categories, were the preferred presentation format. Improvements, however, are still needed. Many commented that there was not enough space near the posters for those lively conversations inspired by the data; seating areas close to the poster sessions were also requested. Symposia were the next preferred presentation format, followed by podium sessions (59% and 47% in the "outstanding" and "excellent" categories, respectively). This was despite many negative remarks about the loud air conditioning fans, cold rooms, and overall poor acoustic environment. Some members discovered that the excellent captioning service was helpful whether or not they were hearing impaired.

Overall, the positive comments on the post-meeting questionnaire suggest that the ARO 2005 MidWinter Meeting venue has improved in the membership's estimation. Nevertheless, there is still work to be done and we hope to incorporate your comments and suggestions to make future meetings even better. In our next Long Range Planning Committee meeting we will discuss ways to accomplish this and consider some of the excellent ideas that we received on the questionnaire. For example, one member suggested that we target vendors that sell products related to the special workshops or symposia held at a particular meeting. The example given was to augment the microarray workshop by encouraging representatives from companies such as Affymetrix to attend the meeting. Other suggestions that need to be discussed further are the organization of break-out sessions along thematic or technical lines, specific events for postdoctoral fellows and graduate students, and special sessions to encourage undergraduates to join the field.

Thank you for your comments. Be sure to contact me or any of the Long Range Planning Committee members with your suggestions before the next MidWinter Meeting.

*Robin L. Davis, Ph.D.*  
*Chair, ARO Long Range Planning Committee*

## ARO Call for Abstracts

The Association for Research in Otolaryngology invites you to electronically submit an abstract for the 29<sup>th</sup> MidWinter Meeting. The ARO abstract site will open September 1, 2005. The deadline to submit is October 1, 2005. Abstracts may be submitted on any of 20 categories on the ARO website by clicking on the abstract submission link. Please visit the ARO website for category details. <http://www.aro.org>.

## Congressman Jindal Receives ARO 2005 Distinguished Public Service Award

The Honorable Bobby Jindal, US Congressman from the State of Louisiana, was our most recent guest of honor at our annual congressional reception held during the 2005 MidWinter Meeting. He received the ARO Presidential Citation from Dr. William Brownell for his support of the health care community.

Congressman Jindal is a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. His previous public service includes time as the Louisiana Secretary of Department of Health & Hospitals, Executive Director of the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare, and Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

*Photo by D. Lim*



*Pictured are: (L to R): Congressman Jindal, William Brownell*

## Call for Symposium and Workshop Proposals for ARO 2007 MidWinter Meeting



The ARO Program Committee is presently soliciting proposals for Symposia and Workshops for the 2007 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 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.

The proposals submission now involves two steps: submission a Letter of Intent followed by solicitation of a Formal Proposal. Letters of Intent are requested with a strict due date of Monday, February 13, at 10:00 am. The letter can be emailed or hand-delivered to the Program Committee chairman or hand delivered to the ARO Registration desk at the 2006 MidWinter Meeting. Legible hand-written letters are acceptable. 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.
- 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 2006 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 abstracts for each talk, a time schedule, etc. Solicited formal proposals will be due on March 6, 2006. The Program Committee will evaluate the proposals shortly thereafter and make the final selections.

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: 734-764-0091  
Email: [jmidd@umich.edu](mailto:jmidd@umich.edu)

E-mail is the preferred medium.

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

*Photo by D. Lim*



*Dr. Robert Shannon was recognized at the 2005 MWM for his service as Program Chair for 2001-2005. Pictured are: (L to R): William Brownell, Robert Shannon, Lloyd Minor*

## AAO-HNSF/ARO Research Forum Call For Papers Deadline: January 4, 2006

The Research Forum, under joint sponsorship by the American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery Foundation and the Association for Research in Otolaryngology will be held in conjunction with the 2006 AAO-HNSF Annual Meeting and OTO EXPO, September 17-20, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The Research Forum includes both oral and poster presentations and provides dedicated time for researchers in otolaryngology to present their findings and encourage the direct transfer of research findings into clinical practice. For full details on submission criteria and instructions, please refer to the Academy's website. <http://www.entnet.org>.

### ARO Symposia, Workshops and Special Events for 2006

#### Symposia

- Molecular Biology of Ear Development: From Molecules to Application
- Efferent Innervation of Hair Cell Systems
- Imaging Protein-Protein Interactions
- Toll-like Receptors
- Activity Dependent Plasticity in the Auditory Brainstem
- Presidential Symposium

#### Workshop

- Adult-Onset Hearing Loss: What's the Damage

#### Presidential Symposium

- Vestibular Mechanisms: Achieving Balance in the Ear

### Make Your Hotel Reservations for the 2006 ARO MWM!

**The Fairmont Hotel**  
**New Orleans, LA, USA**  
February 11-15, 2006

Special rate of \$139.00 for ARO Attendees  
Reservations can be made at:  
1-800-635-4440 or via the web at:  
[www.fairmont.com](http://www.fairmont.com) group code GROTOL

## Members in the News:

### Christine Petit, M.D., Ph.D., Head of an Institut Pasteur-Inserm Unit, Wins Bristol-Myers Squibb Neuroscience Research Award



CHRISTINE PETIT, M.D., Ph.D.  
2005 BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB "FREEDOM TO DISCOVER" AWARD  
FOR DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT IN NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCH  
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company

(NEW YORK, N.Y., July 27, 2005) – Christine Petit, M.D., Ph.D., head of the Unit for Genetics of Sensory Deficits at the Institut Pasteur in Paris, head of Inserm Unit 587, and professor and chair of genetics and cellular physiology at the Collège de France, has been selected to receive the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Bristol-Myers Squibb Freedom to Discover Award for Distinguished Achievement in Neuroscience Research.

A little more than a decade ago, the molecular mechanisms of action for our senses were largely unknown, except for insights into how we see. This changed early in 1993, when Professor Petit initiated her groundbreaking genetic analysis of hereditary deafness. Over time, she went on to isolate the genes responsible for some 16 different forms of deafness and, in so doing, came to better understand the molecular and genetic basis for the function and mechanisms of action of various inner ear components. She also demonstrated that a defect in just one of some 100 genes implicated in early onset forms of hereditary nonsyndromic deafness accounts for about half of all cases of congenital childhood deafness. In fact it is one of the most common gene defect in humans.

Professor Petit's work resulted in a greater understanding of the mechanical structures that control sound stimulation and the biology of the inner ear, the transmission of the auditory stimulus to bundles of sensory hair cells and the role of potassium ions in the cochlea. Since potassium ions carry most of the transduction current in the inner ear, her laboratory's identification of abnormalities in proteins involved in potassium channels led to a breakthrough understanding of a dominant form of deafness.

In addition to her pioneering work in the genetics of hearing, Professor Petit led her team to play an important role in developing new insights about our sense of smell and the mechanisms of action in the olfactory system. Her accomplishments in this field include the elucidation of the genetic basis for Kallmann's syndrome, the only hereditary human disease that results in a total loss of the sense of smell.

"By focusing on the study of inherited hearing loss, Professor Petit deepened our understanding of the molecular basis of hearing and identified the genetic basis of inherited disorders in our sensory systems. She gave us important new insights into the basic development and physiology of sensory functions, including our ability to hear," said Robert Zaczek, Ph.D., group director, Neuroscience Biology at the Bristol-Myers Squibb Pharmaceutical Research Institute. "Furthermore, Professor Petit's pioneering efforts have led to the development of tests to screen newborns for hereditary or childhood deafness. Until her extraordinary work, we knew very little about the underpinnings of hearing at the cell and molecular level and how we translate sounds into signals that can be used to hear. That knowledge has already had significant clinical implications for deaf people and will continue to have major implications on medical practice for years to come."

Among her many honors, Professor Petit received the French Academy of Sciences Prize in 1992, as well as the Charles-Léopold Mayer Prize from the Academy in 1999. In 2001, she was awarded the Ernst Jung "für Wissenschaft und Forschung: Medizin" Prize by the Ernst Jung German Foundation for Science & Medical Research. In 2002, she was named a member of the French Academy of Sciences and she became a Knight of France's Order of the Legion of Honor. In 2004, Professor Petit received the prestigious L'Oréal-UNESCO Award For Women in Science and the Research and Medicine Prize from the Institute of Health Sciences.

The Bristol-Myers Squibb Freedom to Discover Grants and Awards Program, under which the Distinguished Achievement Award is presented, was initiated in 1977. Professor Petit was selected by an independent panel of her peers, in a process in which Bristol-Myers Squibb takes no active role. The Award, a \$50,000 cash prize and a silver commemorative medallion, is presented annually in each of the six therapeutic areas. Professor Petit will officially receive her award at a dinner to be held in New York City on October 20, 2005.

## JARO Update



JARO is now publishing volume 6 with two issues in print and a third in electronic form. We continue to publish with the shortest possible latency, given the publisher's workflow. That is, we are providing manuscripts to the publisher in a just-in-time fashion for the print issues. Manuscript submission remains strong, with 49 manuscripts submitted through the end of July, 2005. The editorial board continues to strive to provide the membership of the ARO with the best possible publishing medium for your research. We are delighted that the scientific community is reading and citing papers published in JARO; our impact factor increased to 2.3 this year, up from 2.0 last year.

Our preprint site has been successful ([www.jaropreprint.org](http://www.jaropreprint.org)). The site allows papers to be put on-line as soon as they are accepted. The on-line papers are pdf files of the final manuscripts that are created by the authors, making them authoritative publications that are essentially identical in content to the papers that will ultimately appear in the on-line and print journal. They have DOI numbers at this stage, so can be cited in other publications. The preprint site is not in Medline, but is captured by web search engines.

By now, it has been announced that I will step down as Editor of JARO. Although I have enjoyed running the journal and working with the ARO leadership on it, it is now time for me to move on to other tasks, including my own research and teaching. I greatly appreciate the support of the ARO membership in providing quality papers for me to edit. I especially appreciate the hard work of the Associate Editors who have worked with me in this task. To a large extent, the success of JARO is due to their efforts. I hope that the Publications Committee and ARO Council will have a new editor in place by the 2006 Midwinter Meeting.

Ultimately the quality of JARO depends on the support of ARO members. We hope that you will consider JARO as the place to publish your work.

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

**Inside this issue:**

Letter from the President .. ..... 1

The 2005 ARO MidWinter Meeting..... 2

Letter from the Editor ..... 3

ARO Contributors..... 3

Long Range Planning Committee Report ..... 4

Distinguished Public Service Award ..... 4

ARO Call for Abstracts..... 4

Call for Symposium and Workshop  
Proposals for ARO 2007 MWM..... 5

ARO Symposia, Workshops and Special  
Events for 2005 .. ..... 5

AAO-HNSF/ARO Research Forum  
Call for Papers ... ..... 5

Members in the News ..... 6

JARO Update..... 6

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