



St. Boniface Hospital Research Centre

Division of Neurovirology & Neurodegenerative Disorders

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Presented to the Executive and Board of the Winnipeg Chapter of the Society on 10 September 2002 was a complete description of activities of the WCSN for the period January 2000 through January 2002. A written description of events for the third year (January 2002 – January 2003) as President will be forthcoming shortly. Here, I would like to outline major events held during the past 3 years and make a few comments about the future of the neurosciences here in Manitoba.

The neuroscience community in Manitoba remains a vibrant although not totally coordinated community. It is composed generally of people in five groups; Spinal Cord Research Centre, Neurodegenerative Diseases, Behavioural Neuroscience, Mood and Anxiety Disorders, and Clinical Neurosciences. Even within these highly successful groups, research and scholarly activities are largely governed by individual interests and not by centralized administrative structures. Importantly, however is the widespread view that we have been and remain one of the four recognized strengths in the Faculty of Medicine and because of this, resources are available to us. Therefore, as we review our past and look towards the future we must remain focused so that we may build on our successes and strengths.

The major activities of this organization continue to revolve around SFN Grass Visiting Lectureships and the annual Brain Awareness Week. It is important to note that as with previous Presidents of WCSN, additional funds to support the activities of the WCSN had to be secured yearly to support our activities; during my Presidency the bulk of this support came from fund raising, the St. Boniface Hospital Research Centre, the Grass Foundation, and the AstraZeneca Visiting Speaker Fund.

Grass Visiting Lectureships: We continue to be one of the most successful programs of which I am aware in receiving one and often times two SFN Grass Visiting Lectureships yearly even though SFN states that chapters should expect only one every other year. In 2000, we hosted Dr. Stephan Redman, in 2001 we hosted Dr. Pierre Magistretti, in 2002 we hosted Dr. Michel Chretien, and so far this year (2003) we are hosting Dr. David Colman.

Brain Awareness Week: Brain Awareness Week activities hosted by the WCSN continue to change yearly. In 2000, we raised \$2800 that helped support the visits of and seminars by Drs. Karen Johnston, Steven Jacobson, Tom Feasby, John Jane, and Dale Corbett. We also organized a "Neuroscience and Mental Health Research Awareness Day" at the Brodie Centre that featured scientific posters, booths and displays by pharmaceutical companies and local not-for-profit organizations, and visits to neuroscience laboratories. In 2001, we raised \$1050 that helped support the visits of and seminars by Drs. Remi



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Quirion and David Westaway. As in the previous year, local not-for-profit organizations had information booths and displays, this time in the Atrium of the St. Boniface Hospital Research Centre. In 2002, Brain Awareness Week activities were focused on our Grass Visiting Lecturer, Dr. Michel Chretien. Please note that we have received already \$2000 from CIHR to support the Brain Awareness Week activities of the WCSN in 2003.

During the period of my Presidency of WCSN we have experienced some positive changes in our Faculty. Clinical Neurosciences saw the return of Dr. Michael West and additional members to the Neurosurgery Department; the Spinal Cord Research Centre welcomed Drs. Brent Fedirchuk and Phillip Gardiner, who was recruited as the CRC Tier I Chair and Director of the Health, Leisure and Human Performance Research Institute; the Behavioral Neuroscience Group welcomed Dr. Tammy Ivanco; the Mood and Anxiety Disorders Group was awarded a CRC Tier II chair for Brian Cox; and the Neuro-degenerative Disorders Research Group welcomed Drs. Michael Mayne, Gordon Glazner and Jiming Kong, and an application by a member of this group for a CRC chair is forthcoming. Although I take no credit for many of the above hires, this level of activity does help illustrate the on going strength of neurosciences in Manitoba.

There are many reasons to keep this organization going forward with vigour. These include, preserving our position as one of the four strongest research disciplines in the Faculty of Medicine, the availability of Grass Visiting Lectureships, the importance to the public at large of Brain Awareness Week, and the availability of SFN funds to Chapters for supporting travel to the SFN Annual Meeting for graduate students and post-doctoral Fellows. Honestly, I think an umbrella neuroscience group such as WCSN can provide us with the kind of base upon which we could build most anything. The limitations are only in the vision and implementation.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sincerely yours,



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