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2009 Summer Meeting at Hilton Head, S.C.

The 33rd annual COS meeting will be held July 29, 2009 – August 2, 2009 at the Crown Plaza Beach Resort in beautiful Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. **You must reserve your room(s) by June 28 in order to obtain the group rate.** There are 3 room types; Standard View, Tropical Garden View and Horizon View. Availability of Horizon View rooms is very limited. You may book your room by calling the Crown Plaza directly at 800-334-1881. For those interested in playing golf, you may contact the concierge service at the Crowne Plaza.

A lunch is offered on Thursday and dinners are offered nightly. A number of speakers are scheduled to give presentations on topics ranging from pediatric ophthalmology to Christian-based medical ethics. There is a spouse and guest program offered as well as a children’s program for ages infant to 18 years. Registration for the meeting, childcare and meals can be completed by going online to <http://cme.ouhsc.edu> or by calling Jan Quayle at 405-271-2350, ext.1. Scholarships and grants are available for medical students, residents, fellows and missionaries by sending an email to Sterling Cannon, M.D. at grants@cosw.org or calling him at 706-323-3491. For accommodations on the basis of disability, call Jan at 405-271-2350.



Crowne Plaza Hotel at Hilton Head

Web Site:

www.crowneplaza.com

Prices and rates are available by viewing the brochure online at www.cosw.org. See you at the beach!

For More Information, Contact

*Enoch N. Tsai, MD
ATTN: Kevin Bralley
111 Gregg Ave
Aiken, SC 29801
entsaimd@gmail.com
(803)-278-2594
FAX (803)-649-7633*

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Join Crowne Plaza Priority Club

A 15% discount is given for:

- *lunch and dinners in Brellas Cafe (their coffee shop/main dining room)*
- *dinner in Portz Restaurant (nice dining room)*
- *their resort shop and*
- *bike rentals.*

You can sign up on their website www.priorityclub.com or call 1-888-211-9874.



Letter from the President

by Mike Siatkowski, M.D. COS President

Spring 2009

Dear Friends,

At our recent COS Board meeting we reviewed plans for the 2009 annual meeting in Hilton Head, SC, July 29-August 2. The resort is beautiful and we have an outstanding scientific and spiritual program lined up, along with terrific spouse's and children's programs. If you have not yet done so, register online at <http://cme.ouhsc.edu!>

Immediately following the annual meeting, Dr. Sterling Cannon of Columbus, GA will assume the Presidency of the COS. I am so thankful that God has raised up Sterling for this position, and am confident that he will be an absolutely outstanding leader. I have known Sterling for over a decade and can personally attest that he is a committed follower of Christ, a faithful husband, a devoted father, an excellent physician and surgeon, and a man of warm personality and good cheer. He has superb judgment, keen insight, and a great desire to serve. His wife Heather is a smart, lovely, and vivacious woman, and their children Lane and Wiley are delightful. Sterling and I have formulated a smooth transition plan and we can assure you that the workings of the COS will not miss a beat. In short, Sterling Cannon is unquestionably God's choice to lead the COS at this critical juncture, and I know that he will bring our Society to higher levels than we can imagine.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for the opportunity to lead the COS over the last nine years. Truly it has been one of my greatest honors to follow after such wise and godly men as J. Lawton Smith

and Brad Farris. God has taught me a lot through my COS experiences, and I will share much of this with you during my farewell address in Hilton Head. One overarching theme is that we as Christians are to function in unity as we seek to glorify God here on earth. There are countless things the enemy uses to divide us—and most of these are merely our individual opinions on matters that pale in comparison to the fundamentals of the divinity of Jesus Christ and His saving grace for us all. On the other issues we should celebrate our freedom as Christians to worship, experience, serve, and relate to God in the ways He has designed us to. We have to remember that the degree of commonality of opinion we may desire in our intimate relationships should differ from that required for our involvement in larger bodies of believers. From a corporate standpoint we must celebrate the Savior and keep our eyes focused on Him. The devil desires us to look at one another and ourselves, but there is no limit to what the COS can accomplish with our eyes focused on the prize of Jesus! He tells us, "Call to me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things that you do not know" and He reminds us that His "Perfect love casts out all fear."

I thank God for each of you and look forward to seeing you this summer.

In His Holy Name,
R. Michael Siatkowski MD
President, COS

" I extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for the opportunity to lead the COS over the last nine years."

Missions Conference

By Dr. Stan Pletcher

Please join us for an exciting "missions" meeting featuring ophthalmology mission's topics which will be on Thursday, July 30th of our annual meeting. This year we are excited to have Dr. M. Edward Wilson speaking on pediatric cataracts in the developing world including IOL selection tips and more. Willie Hunter, executive director of Medical Ministry International will be featured as the noon lecturer, with a topic entitled, "Where is God in vision?" We'll be getting reports from mission efforts in Nigeria and Haiti by Dr. Devin Harrison and by Dr. Darrell Jervey. Dr. Stan Pletcher will be giving an update on "WHO guidelines for cataract outcome monitoring on the mission field".

Special guest, Dr. Glenn Strauss, medical director of the Mercy Ships will be speaking on the

Thursday night missions banquet regarding, "Teaching professionalism in the mission field - why good techniques are not enough"

We are especially excited about a new offering that will be held as a pre-meeting session on Wednesday night. This will be an open discussion led by Dr. Van Joffrion, chairman of CBM-USA regarding "synergy between mission agencies". This will promise to be lively and interactive. We look forward to your attendance at all of these sessions.

If you are unable to come this year to the meeting, we invite you to visit our website where an update of the meeting will be posted. If you have particular interest in a mission's topic or in have a prepared lecture that you would like to offer, please email this to: missions@cosw.org for consideration in a future meeting's preparation

Spouses Program for the Annual Meeting

by Jan Paschall

"In times like these, we need a Savior. In times like these, we need an Anchor! Be very sure, be Very sure, your anchor holds and grip the Solid Rock."

As we recall the hymns of old, there is nothing new in earth. Times have been "hard" for people since time began.

We DO need an anchor and we have been blessed to know the only one who is worthy of our trust and dependence.

As I look forward to seeing many of you at COS in Hilton Head this summer, I pray that your anchor holds and that you experience anew the

faithfulness of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Because we want to be a blessing to all the spouses-women and men, a couple have been invited to share with us. This year we will be blessed by Bill and Peggy Otten, founders of Lifeline International and Reaching Our World. Their passion is to see lives changed by the power of God and believers motivated to action by the grace of God upon their lives.

Do plan to join us on Thursday for fellowship and sharing informally and then on Friday and Saturday to hear Bill and Peggy.

Keep on keeping on—don't let the anchor slip.

COS Children's Program

There is an atmosphere of fun, filled with love and encouragement at the children's programs at the COS annual meetings. The childcare coordinators each have years of experience in their field. Shawn, Susan, and Holly are returning from last year. Helpers will be determined by the number of children registered. If you have any questions contact Joy at JLCrumpton@yahoo.com.



Eye Department at Bongolo Hospital in Gabon, West Africa

In 2005 and 2006, Dr. Christopher Lin and Dr. Robert Trent traveled to Bongolo Hospital to perform cataract and glaucoma surgeries and to supervise and provide advanced training to the hospital's cataract technician. Since then, the trained cataract technician performed hundreds of cataract surgeries, restoring sight to many individuals who were blinded by their cataracts. Despite this, more people were developing cataracts than were receiving cataract surgeries. Unfortunately, God led the cataract technician and his wife to return to England, and no cataract surgeries have been performed since approximately August, 2008.

The current operating tables and equipment at the hospital are old and minimally functional, limiting the number and scope of eye surgeries. Instruments are currently sterilized with acetone. An autoclave will provide a chemical free safe method to ensure sterility of surgical instruments. In addition, the clinic does not own a YAG laser. With proposed new equipment, the ability to perform relatively basic procedures to preserve vision by surgically treating glaucoma and to restore vision through cataract surgeries will be dramatically improved and made more efficient.

Glaucoma is a blinding eye disease that unfortunately strikes many West Africans. Dr. Lin, a glaucoma specialist, had the opportunity to examine many glaucoma patients on his

two visits to Bongolo Hospital. Unfortunately, the great majority of the patients he examined were blind or nearly blind from this condition. An estimated 104,000 Gabonese have glaucoma and the great majority are either unaware or are aware of their condition but do not receive treatment.

Patients who seek glaucoma care at Bongolo Eye Clinic are given glaucoma medications that will last for approximately one month. Many do not return to the Eye Clinic for 6 to 12 months. Most cannot afford medications and/or do not have access to pharmacies. Their glaucoma remains untreated and they become permanently blinded. A Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty Laser will allow long lasting treatment for those patients who do not have access to standard glaucoma medication treatments. Traveling to Bongolo Eye Clinic for glaucoma surgery gives these patients a chance to avoid certain blindness.

How Can You Help?:

There are many ways that you can help with this ministry. First and most importantly, please pray for the needs of the Bongolo Hospital Eye Department and the patients who seek eye care at Bongolo. Pray that their physical needs are met. But most importantly, pray that they gain spiritual insight just as they regain their physical sight. Pray for Dr. Hofman as she and her husband embark on their new career in full-time medical missions, and pray for Dr. Baruwa to carefully and completely acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to become an excellent eye surgeon and physician.

Second, please consider a financial contribution or partnership with us in this ministry. The estimated cost of Dr. Baruwa's salary and expenses is \$36,280 for his first year (covering his and his family's moving expenses, visa, housing, transportation, salary of \$790 per month, and rent). We are hoping that 10 people would be willing to commit \$100 monthly for the next two years to help cover his expense. (Compare the salary of the doctor in Gabon to the \$40,000 annual salary of an American medical resident!). The estimated cost of the equipment needs identified for the clinic is \$75,000. Finally, Bongolo Hospital has run out of on-campus housing for the many missionaries and residents. The hospital wishes to build a new 2 apartment building to house the eye resident and a new PAACS resident at a cost of \$80,000.

Dr. Thompson has asked if any of you supporters would be interested in helping raise \$40,000 to build the eye resident's apartment. If you would like to make a monthly contribution or a one-time gift towards the eye resident salary, the eye resident apartment, or the Eye Clinic equipment, please let us know so we can track our progress in reaching these goals.



Christian Ophthalmology Society Newsletter

C/O John & Anne Cox
333 Whitesport Center, Suite 101
Huntsville, AL 35801

Thank you for your prayers, and for any financial contribution you feel led to make. Your tax deductible contributions may be made by check to:

Neighborhood Church of Redding
(Please write "Gabon Eye Fund" in the memo section of your check.)

Your check may be mailed to our office or to Neighborhood Church:

Gabon Eye Fund c/o Shasta Eye Medical Group
3190 Churn Creek Road
Redding, CA 96002

Gabon Eye Fund
Neighborhood Church of Redding
777 Loma Vista
Redding, CA 96002

In His Service,

Christopher Lin, MD

Robert Trent, MD

The Christian Ophthalmology Society was founded in 1977 as an interdenominational group of eye physicians and surgeons who confess that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord.

"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him."

John 3:17