

To Boldly Go Where No Man (Prosthodontist) Has Gone Before

For those of you who are of the same vintage, you may recall these classic words from the 1966 to 1969 television series; to those who are much younger, this is the opening theme of the original Star Trek series. Now, what does this have to do with Prosthodontics or the ACP? Quite a lot, if you consider some of the new adventures the ACP is undertaking.

First, on September 26 of this year, several of our ACP colleagues will be participating in the Federation Dentaire International (FDI) World Congress in Stockholm, Sweden. Our group will have an afternoon symposium speaking on “21st Century Management of Edentulism—A World of Challenges in a Universe of Helpful Technologies.” Dr. Jonathan Ferencz, Past President of the ACP, will moderate the session, which will include presentations on “the epidemiology of edentulism and comorbid conditions,” “patient-based outcomes of treatment of edentulism,” “contemporary techniques for denture fabrication,” “the social solution for dentures—esthetics, phonetics, and comfort,” and “the current and future treatment of edentulism.” Joining Dr. Ferencz will be ACP members Drs. Thomas Salinas, Eleni Roumanas, Lyndon Cooper, and myself, along with Dr. Fraser McCord of Glasgow, Scotland. While the ACP has participated in other meetings by providing speakers and having a fixed session(s) devoted to prosthodontic issues (the recent AO, the Toronto Conference Revisited, and the Chicago Dental Society meetings, for example), I believe this is our first venture “across the pond.” This presentation, before members of the FDI, is a first, and one that can put the ACP, and the issue of complete edentulism, on the map. Our participation is due to the generous support of GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). GSK has also agreed to sponsor publishing manuscripts from this symposium as a supplement to the *Journal of Prosthodontics*, in order to make the information presented available to a larger body of practicing dentists than our membership and library consortia. The manuscripts will be peer reviewed, just as all other manuscripts are, but they will be collated and bound as a separate supplemental issue. This is the first of what I hope will be many successful joint ventures between the ACP and our corporate colleagues.

Second, at our last annual session, our House of Delegates voted to dissolve itself in favor of a newer, more streamlined governance structure. Very shortly, you will be asked to vote on new members of the Board of Directors, as well as new and existing officers of the College. The membership, not the House or Board of Directors, will be selecting the future leaders of the

ACP. Again, this is very new territory for the College, and an area where there will be some growing pains, and an associated learning curve. However, do not allow that to keep you from exercising your right to vote—it is critically important to our future.

Finally, the ACP Education Foundation (ACPEF) will launch our Vision 2012 member campaign, following a year of the “silent phase” of fundraising from our corporate colleagues. Let us take a moment and do a little math. With approximately 2700 active members, if everyone would pledge to give \$5000 over five years (i.e., \$1000 per year, or \$83.33 per month), we could raise \$13,500,000.00! With the \$4.7 million we have raised thus far from our corporate sponsors in the Vision 2012 campaign, along with the \$4+ million we raised from our New Vision campaign, we would clearly be set to elevate prosthodontics to previously unsurpassed levels—to go where the ACP has never gone before! We have already accomplished great things with funds raised from our inaugural New Vision Campaign—we have sponsored ACP membership for our graduate residents, and have partially funded their participation in our annual session; we have funded symposia on digital dentistry; provided funds for our Graduate Program Directors to meet outside of the annual session for frank discussions on curricular content, resident recruitment, faculty recruitment and retention, etc; we have funded new Graduate Programs in Prosthodontics; funded research projects—just to mention a few. All of these endeavors are very important to our future—to your future, because what is good for Prosthodontics is good for each of us individually. Getting our ACPEF coffers to the \$20 million level will most likely allow us to “live on the interest” such that the ACPEF does not have to go back to the membership in another 5 years with yet another fund raiser. And, it will allow us to be on par with other specialty organizations in the fund raising arena, and facilitate our continuing support for programs and projects with our corporate colleagues. It is the old “Fram Oil Filter” television commercial scenario—“pay me now, or pay me later.” It really is time you joined your colleagues, and made the commitment to do something very positive for your organization. After all, your organization is clearly doing something for each of you. Is not it time that you helped the ACP boldly go where we have never been before?

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