

# American Association of Genitourinary Surgeons

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## AAGUS Newsletter September 2008

Disclosure: This will take you about 10 minutes to read and includes information to help you get ready for the 2009 AAGUS season.

1. Autumn greetings. The French have a word to describe the re-entry from summer holidays to the "real" world of work and school as la rentrée. For all of the self-satisfaction that the industrial and information ages have given us, we still default to an agrarian age mindset where the summer was a time to retreat to the fields and farms. It's just that now the work in fields and farms has turned in to summer vacation and holidays. I hope your holidays were refreshing.

2. We are still feeling the grief over the loss of John Stein at our Naples meeting. Even now, there is little concrete explanation for his sudden death aside from evidence for a toxic shock type of syndrome related to a bacterial infection. The Gold Journal, UROLOGY, had a nice cover and article about him (and gave permission to include this in our newsletter), and Bob Flanigan wrote a beautiful piece about John in AUA Today. Randi Stein wrote to me and the GU Surgeons: "Thank you so much for your kind expression of sympathy, your loving thoughts and the nice photo of a happy time. This is a profoundly difficult juncture in our lives to be sure. We have been heartened by your thoughtful concern for us. We thank everyone in the AAGUS for the generous gift for the children's fund, and wish you all well."

A fund has been established for the four Stein Children and another at USC for a professorship. Donations can be made to either the "John Stein Children's Trust Fund" c/o UBS Financial Services Inc. - Operations Dept., 2000 Avenue of the Stars, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor North, Los Angeles, CA 90067,

or the "John P. Stein Chair in Urology" c/o USC Department of Urology, 1441 Eastlake Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90033.

3. Early in September we lost another treasure of the GU Surgeons. John Donohue, our recent Keyes medalist, passed away after a massive stroke in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. He was an iconic figure in urology, a great mentor, teacher, innovator, and surgeon. I recall John's gracious speech at our Naples meeting and his beautiful comments on John Stein.

4. The full set of the AAGUS Members Survey questionnaire results is attached. Our response rate was 58%. The key points that I derived:

- Most responders are satisfied with basic meeting structure.
- We should ask for relevant disclosures.
- People like sunny places in April and May.
- The selection process is painful and should be changed.

5. The 123<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Association of Genitourinary Surgeons will take place at The Lodge at Torrey Pines, 11480 North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla, California, May 6-9, 2009. The opening cocktail reception will be held on Wednesday evening, May 6<sup>th</sup>. Meetings will be held on Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings. The Registration Fee for the meeting will be determined after we plan meals, events, etc. and will be available in the Winter Newsletter.

6. Transportation. The Lodge at Torrey Pines is about 25 minutes from San Diego International Airport. Transportation is available through La Jolla Transportation (Phone: 858-456-7410). Taxi cabs are also available for transport for around \$70 each way. If you choose to rent a vehicle, self-parking is \$21 and Valet Parking is \$27 per day at the Resort.

7. Accommodations. The Lodge at Torrey Pines in La Jolla, California overlooks the Pacific Ocean, immediately adjacent to the 18<sup>th</sup> green of the Torrey Pines Golf Course. A Reservation Form is enclosed which you may fax your reservation to 858-488-1387. You may contact The Lodge at Torrey Pines at 858-453-4420 [or Toll Free: USA 800-656-0087; Canada 800-233-8172; Mexico 800-288-0740] to make your reservation. Please identify yourself as being with the AAGUS when making your reservation. If you wish to register via the Internet you may log onto

<https://shop.evanshotels.com/aag0506lp9.html>. *Do not make reservations via other methods (such as hotels.com) as you will not be included in our contract with the Lodge.* All reservations require a credit card guarantee at the time booking. The deadline for reservations is March 20, 2009. A few superb suites (Palisade rooms) are available for real bargains and will be put out on a first come first served basis. I urge you to make your reservations early to ensure desired accommodations. To secure our meeting sites we need to guarantee a specific number of rooms each night at the prices of our contract. Our contract rates are: \$345 for Signature rooms which overlook the botanical reserve and \$495 for Palisade rooms which offer spectacular views overlooking the Torrey Pines Golf Course and the Pacific Ocean. Outside our contract the standard room rate is \$525 and golf view \$700. Thus for the first night we guarantee 161 full rooms and by Saturday night we guarantee only 55 rooms. If we don't fill these rooms we still have to pay. The same goes for food and beverage events. If we have to overflow, there is a nice Hilton next door and this should also be a little less expensive alternative for those who might prefer another venue. We are looking into those details.

8. Our new Active Members are John Brock, Doug Canning, Len Gomella, Kevin McVary, Marshall Stoller, Dan Theodorescu, Bedford Waters, and Dave Wood. Christiaan Bangma and Arnulf Stenzl are our new International Members. Please go out of your way to meet and welcome them next year at Torrey Pines.

9. Membership proposals. Thank you for suggestions and advice regarding streamlining this painful process.

The deadline for proposed new membership candidates is November 1, 2008. There are (8) vacancies on the Active Member Roster for 2009. There will be (4) openings on the Active Roster in 2010 and (3) openings in 2011. Nominations must consist of a detailed letter accompanied by a candidate's current curriculum vitae (including date of birth, office and home address, and spouse's first name) and two seconding letters. Nominations should be sent to the Secretary-Treasurer or via email to Sandra Heskett at sheskett@umich.edu.

10. Abstracts. The current format of our meeting allows for 32 papers only from members and each new member is expected to present a paper to

the group. The deadline for abstract submission is November 15, 2008. Remember the word limit of 100 words. This allows us some uniformity and size control over the program book. Also it is easier on the program committee, which is in fact, the Council. If the abstract is readable, cogent, and convincing the crusty councilors are more likely to understand it. If it is free of typos etc, the editor (me) has less work to do. Receiving your abstract by email is preferred, and you may send it to my assistant, Sandra Heskett, at [sheskett@umich.edu](mailto:sheskett@umich.edu).

11. This year all participants will be required to complete an AAGUS Disclosure Form. There is a form included in this Newsletter, or, you may download the form from the AAGUS website, [www.aagus.org](http://www.aagus.org).

12. Guests. The AAGUS Constitution limits the number of guests and as usual we had nearly twice as many requests as we could honor. The Council looked at the CV's and letters of recommendation and during a conference call selected the following guests to be invited to the 2009 Annual Meeting: Jay Bishoff, Toby Chai, Sam Chang, Bob Djavan, Richard Foster, John Gearhart, Enrique Jaureguizar, Jamie Landman, Gary Lemack, Seth Lerner, Jean Patard, David Penson, Dimitri Pushkar, Paul Russo, Ellen Shapiro, George Thalmann, Arnauld Villers, and Stuart Wolf. My apologies if your request was not listed, but please feel free to submit the name next year.

13. AAGUS structure:

Council: Terry Allen, President; David Barrett, Vice-President; David Bloom, Secretary-Treasurer; George Drach, Senior Councilor, and Elspeth McDougall, Junior Councilor.

Membership Committee: William Steers, John McConnell, Glenn Preminger, Michael Koch, and Craig Peters.

Nominating Committee: Fray Marshall, Scott McDougal, and Jack McAninch.

Awards Committee: Patrick Walsh, Bernard Lytton, Terry Allen, David Barrett, and Elspeth McDougall.

Audit Committee: Drogo Montague and Gerald Sufrin.

14. Your costs as members of the AAGUS are twofold. One is the dues to cover organizational expenses and maintain a bank account. The other is the meeting registration to cover the meeting expense. Some people get

confused if they paid one thing and not the other, but think they have paid both. Name tags will be available to all paid members and guests when you sign in at the opening reception. If we haven't received your dues or meeting registration you will encounter a "speedbump" as your name tag will not be in the packet. There is no need to get feisty about this if it happens to you. Of course my office can make a mistake, but that hasn't happened yet in this regard. So please just keep in mind that you have two expenses with the AAGUS each year and if somehow a glitch occurs we will sort it out together.

15. Dues. The 2009 dues will cover May, 2008 to April, 2009; \$260 for Active Members and \$145 for Fellows and International Members. Last year the Council decided that it was time to increase the dues to cover a number of years of inflation - Active Members would stay the same at \$260, but an increase of the Fellows and International Members to \$200. Novice that I am, I forgot to bring this recommendation to the membership, so we will bring this up at our next business meeting in Torrey Pines. For members who have paid their dues a receipt is enclosed and for those members who have not paid an annual dues form is enclosed.

By not having a professional organization run the AAGUS we keep all expenses down. Martha and I have been able to scout other venues and plan meetings pretty inexpensively, using other paid-for trips and staying with friends for all site visits so far. And Sandy, my assistant, is frugal to the bone. Yet we still need a fair bank account to cover the sizable deposits necessary to reserve meeting sites and provide a cushion for an inevitable rainy day. Details are reviewed by the audit committee and will be presented at the next business meeting. Dave and Sib Barrett and Barbara Lamont did the job of managing the AAGUS amazingly well before us and the McCullough's and the Howards before them. It was the decision of the Council to continue this volunteer tradition rather than contracting it out - and it is our pleasure to continue, with the wonderful cooperation and kindness of our members and their spouses, partners and guests.

16. Meeting expenses. Gearing up for the 2009 meeting at Torrey Pines, we will be setting up the specific details with the Lodge in January to pick settings, meals, entertainment, etc. Our intent is to be responsible fiscally but not cheap. From the anticipated expenses, we will make a budget and

will set the registration accordingly. The Lodge at Torrey Pines is elegant and we will be nearly taking over the place.

The intent is that registration fees should match the meeting expenses. Last year the registration income was \$168,150 and meeting expenses were \$159,814.02 (which includes gift to Steins as this was partly his registration). It does come close and much depends on the quality and goodwill of the venue. So last year when a number of members wanted extra electrical outlets, there could easily have been a few hundred dollars of new charges, but the Ritz threw them in at no added cost. Many other "nickel and dime" charges can become an extra \$5,000 - \$10,000, but really classy places and good working relationships don't let that happen. Registration costs are leveraged so that participants pay more and your spouse or partner gets a very good deal. You will be issued separate receipts for dues, and member-invited guest registrations. Receipts for spouse-partner registrations must be individually issued.

17. What we will do at our next business meeting.
  - a.) Dues
  - b.) Member selection

Please do not hesitate to give me a call at any time if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

David A. Bloom, M. D.  
Secretary-Treasurer, AAGUS

Enclosures: UROLOGY article on John Stein  
AAGUS Member Survey questionnaire results  
The Lodge at Torrey Pines Reservation Form  
Policy Statement  
Disclosure Form  
Dues Receipt/or Form for active members/fellows/international members