

The Society for Computer Applications in Radiology

The Society for Computer Applications in Radiology (SCAR) is sponsoring or supporting several meetings of direct interest to members again this year. The recent meeting in Newport Beach, which SCAR supported, again showcased the best and newest research and practical applications of computer applications in medicine, and more specifically, within radiology.

Within the next few months, the 1993 *Image Management and Communication* and the immediately following 1993 *Computer-Assisted Radiology Meeting* will be held in Berlin in late June. These meetings promise to be equally informative and should have significant European participation. There will be a staffed SCAR booth at these meetings. There will also be a special focus session at the meeting on the new American College of Radiology/National Electrical Manufacturer's Association 3.0 or DICOM standard.

We have been asked again this year to submit a list of possible speakers for the Inforad portion of the Radiological Society of North America 1993.

The organizing committee for the 1994 S/CAR meeting in Winston Salem, NC, hosted by the Bowman Gray School of Medicine Department of Radiology, is beginning to firm-up plans for that upcoming meeting. All of these meetings represent forums for our Society to continue to take a significant role within the field of digital imaging.

One of the privileges of being President is having the opportunity to communicate with the membership on a regular basis via this page. I would like to direct our thoughts in a particular vein, that of our Society membership.

SCAR fulfills an entirely unique role within the medical imaging community. It is the only Society currently that can boast of having *all* of the following:

- membership open to both individuals and corporations within industry, academia, and private practice;
- a well-respected, refereed *Journal* that concentrates exclusively on topics related to digital imaging and computers;
- the SCAR News, for the dissemination of more timely news within the field of digital imaging;
- involvement in all of the annual major computer-related meetings; and
- a commitment to take an important role in the task of educating the radiological community on computer related topics.

On that last point, the Technology Forum, headed by Dr Shilling, has produced an extremely successful handbook on picture archiving and communication systems, of which more than 7,000 copies have already been printed and distributed. The Forum is in the midst of finishing their second handbook on teleradiology. The Society also has strongly committed itself to involvement

in issues of quality assurance and outcome studies, as we believe that existing and future technology will have a major impact in these areas.

So you might ask, "How does all of this come back to membership?": That is very straightforward. Our current membership is more than 400. This size of membership makes production of the *Journal* a borderline break-even financial situation. The yearly cash flow from our members is such that although all of our normal operations can be maintained, the amount of money coming in is not sufficient to, for example, contract for a meeting site with the necessary guarantees for a certain block of rooms, or a certain block of exhibition space. Because of this lack of size, in the past our meetings have been guaranteed by our parent organization, Radiology Information System Consortium. Those of us on the Governance Council believe that, in the future, it may be advantageous for SCAR to become a separate corporate entity which, among other things, would allow us to contract for and guarantee our own meetings in the future. However, this is not possible given the current size of our membership.

Because of these issues, the Governance Board, in addition to its activities in support of meetings, publications, and other educational materials, has chosen to focus a good portion of its energies this year on membership development. A new brochure that easily fits within your pocket, with a tear-off separation, is being produced. The brochure will mention all of the benefits of membership, including the *Journal* itself, SCAR News, and the Technology Forum papers. What I am proposing is that each one of you, when the new membership forms are finalized, introduce just one or two of your coworkers to our Society. Membership fees are very reasonable, and do include the *Journal*. A simple act on each member's part of bringing in one additional member, could double the size of our Society to 700 or 800 members during the course of the next year. The Governance Board will be working in parallel with any individual efforts to encourage membership from corporations, academia, and private practice radiology. Indeed, if any of the membership has additional ideas on ways to further the growth of our Society, I would personally be glad to speak with you at your convenience.

As your President for 1993, I look forward to a year of very significant scientific involvement, education, and hopefully growth of our Society.

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