

Optimum VA

NAVAO Newsletter

April 2002

President's Report

VA Optometry news.

Well we survived another winter and here we are in Daylight Savings Time, Spring, Baseball, and winding down another Residency Year as we head down the stretch towards the completion 6/30/02.

NAVAO is still working on the concept of **Advanced Competency Recognition** for our Residency Trained folks. We hope to have a finalized plan in place within the next month and I will report on our progress during monthly conference calls that **Dr. Townsend** has.

This was the first year that **ORMS** served as the "matchmaker" for all incoming residents from accredited programs in the USA. What made this year both exciting and difficult was the fact that due to the hard work of **Dr. Townsend**, Optometry was awarded an additional 20 Residencies this year funded by the VA. While most positions were matched and even those unmatched were filled quickly, some will have to be re-allocated to places where candidates exist....stay tuned.

Thanks to the hard work of **Drs. Michael White, Loren Bennett, and Gary Brough**, we just completed an on line survey of salary and job satisfaction via **mednav.com**. Information received will be used in our quest for better benefits. Along the same lines, **Dr. Townsend** has put together a committee of senior field optometrists plus NAVAO (represented by the president) to look at existing Qual Standards and make suggestions to particularly improve the lot of those immediately out of a Residency beginning work at the VA. Hopefully, our organization will become more competitive for young talent especially in high cost of living areas like the major cities around the nation.

And now a request: **SUPPORT NAVAO!!!**

NAVAO is the only organization that is working for the personal benefit of **VA Field Optometrists**. Our dues of \$40 annually are quite modest considering the "bang for the buck". For those of you who haven't paid your 2002 dues and there are many of you, please pay! Without your support, we could not do what we've done over the past years and we will be unable to pursue the issues which are so important to **VA Optometrists**.

Have a great Spring...I'll be back to you early in the summer. Stay abreast of happenings in between times by listening to and participating in our monthly conference calls.

- Jerry.

Clinical Pearls

Highlights from recent publications.

- **LATE BLEB-RELATED COMPLICATIONS WITH MITOMYCIN**

In a seven-year period, 239 eyes had trabeculectomies performed with mitomycin used to inhibit postoperative scarring. Retrospective analysis was done to determine the incidence of late onset complications. 8% had a bleb leak, 2% had an episode of blebitis and 3% developed an episode of endophthalmitis. There seems to be no period during the postoperative period when the eyes are more or less vulnerable to complications. Most bleb leaks can be conservatively managed with antibiotics, contact lenses, or mecrylate glue while others may require surgical intervention.

DeBry PW, et al. Arch Ophthalmol/Vol. 120, Mar 2002

- **ORBITAL TUMORS IN THE ELDERLY**

At the Wills Eye Hospital Oncology Service, 21% of 950 consecutive patients with orbital tumors were over the age of 60. Clinical signs and symptoms included: palpable or visualized mass, proptosis, pain, blurred vision, red eye, ptosis, diplopia or asymptomatic. 62% of the lesions were extraconal. Malignancy was found in 63% of the orbital tumors in this study compared to 21-35% in other studies of the general population. The most common diagnoses were: malignant lymphoma, idiopathic orbital inflammation, and cavernous hemangioma. 10% of the patients had or developed systemic cancer, 15% had or developed related systemic lymphoma and 16% of the patients died from related systemic disease.

Demirci H, et al. Ophthalmology/Vol. 109, Feb 2002

• **TRANSPUPILLARY THERMOTHERAPY AND SMALL CHOROIDAL MELANOMAS**

256 patients with newly diagnosed small (base 2.0-14.0 mm, thickness 1.0-5.2 mm) choroidal melanomas were evaluated at the Wills Eye Hospital. 84% of the lesions had subretinal fluid, 78% had orange pigment on the surface and 45% had documented growth. An infrared radiation device directed a beam of energy through the dilated pupil and into the neoplasm to induce tumor cell necrosis. After 1-7 treatments, 91% of the lesions did not recur. Recurrence was more likely to occur in patients with additional treatment or those in which the lesion abutted or overhung the optic nerve. Advantages over radiation include: precision, immediate necrosis with visible regression and ability to treat under local anesthesia on an outpatient basis. The most common complications were retinal traction (44%), BRVO (41%), BRAO (12%) and CME (9%).

Shields CL, et al. Ophthalmology/Vol. 109, Feb 2002

• **WHAT TO ADD TO A BETA-BLOCKER, ALPHAGAN OR XALATAN?**

115 patients who had been inadequately controlled on once or twice daily selective or non-selective Beta-Blockers were randomized to either brimonidine 0.2% b.i.d. or latanoprost 0.005% qpm. If the target IOP was not reached at the end of 1 month, the patient was switched to the other medication. After 3 months, the mean IOP reduction within the brimonidine group (4.6 mmHg, 21.6%) was statistically similar to those using latanoprost (5.5 mmHg, 25.4%). Patients on latanoprost reported more watery eyes, depression, photophobia, loss of sexual interest/performance wheezing and less fatigue than brimonidine patients. Patients who failed to respond to dual therapy with one combination may have responded well to a different combination. Replacement therapy should be tried before adding a third medication.

Simmons ST, et al. Ophthalmology/Vol. 109, Feb 2002

• **STANDARD PERIMETRY VS SWAP VS FDT FOR GLAUCOMA DETECTION**

133 age-matched patients classified as: moderate glaucoma, ocular hypertension, glaucoma suspects and normals, were evaluated for percentage of abnormal visual field points depressed less than 5% and 1% using Standard Achromatic Perimetry (SAP), Short Wavelength Automated Perimetry (SWAP), and Frequency Doubling Technology (FDT) perimetry. Results of the study indicate that SWAP appeared to underestimate the existing defects in normals and other groups and differed from SAP when comparing the points

depressed in the upper hemifield versus the lower hemifield. The authors suggest that the current statistical package for SWAP is not optimized or is poorly adjusted. FDT results are comparable to SAP and are capable of identifying early glaucomatous defects in ocular hypertensives and glaucoma suspects and may be a better as a screening tool.

Soliman MAE, et al. Ophthalmology/Vol. 109, Mar 2002

- **VIAGRA AND NAION**

Five patients aged 42-69, developed findings consistent with NAION after initiating sildenafil citrate (Viagra). Onset of symptoms ranged from a few days after initiating usage to one to years of periodic usage. Other reported ocular side effects with Viagra include: transient changes in brightness or color perception and third nerve palsy. Only one of the five studied patients had vascular risk factors such as hypertension, diabetes or coagulopathy but all had small cup-to-disc ratios. Viagra may alter the perfusion of the optic nerve by influencing the levels of nitric oxide; a vasodilator which regulates blood pressure. The authors suggest patients with a prior history of NAION in one eye not be prescribed Viagra and that all patients on the medicine should be educated about potential ocular side effects.

Pomeranz HD, et al. Ophthalmology/Vol. 109, Mar 2002

- **RETINAL ARTERIOLAR NARROWING AND CORONARY DISEASE IN WOMEN**

9648 men and women aged 51 to 72 years without coronary heart disease (CHD) had retinal photographs taken. The photographs were evaluated to document arteriole to venule ratio (AVR). Intraobserver and interobserver reliability for AVR was .84 and .79. Women with smaller AVRs were found to have increased risk of incident CHD. These findings were not found in men. The findings probably reflect microvascular disease processes. Readers should realize that additional study is needed to determine whether the findings are relevant to prevention and treatment of CHD in women.

Wong TY, et al. JAMA/Vol. 287, March 2002

Thoroughbreds

Kudos to the lecturers / writers within the VA Optometry Service.

Lectured:

Sheila Anderson, AAO, 12/01, Fluorescein Angiography Injection Workshop

Loren Bennett, AAO, 12/01, The Ocular Ischemic Syndrome

Kelliann Dignam, AAO, 12/01, Visual Field Interpretation Workshop

Bernard Dolan, AAO International, April 2002, Optic Nerve Assessment

Steve Ferrucci, AAO, 12/01, Care of the Diabetic Patient: Case Reports

Murray Fingeret, AAO International, April 2002, Ocular Disease

Murray Fingeret, AAO 12/01, Clinical Guide to the Optic Nerve and Visual Field in Glaucoma

Shelly Hay, AAO 12/01, Essentials for Interpretation of Fluorescein Angiography

Anthony Litwak, SECO, 02/02, Glaucoma Update 2002

Robert Newcomb, AAO International, 04/02, Primary Care

Stuart Richer, AAO, 12/01, Treating Atrophic ARMD

Cliff Stephens, AAO, 12/01, Physical Diagnosis and Ancillary Testing Workshop

Published:

Bennett, Loren W. Effectiveness in Meeting Recommended Standards for Annual Diabetic Eye Examinations at a Veterans Health Administration Facility. [Military Medicine](#). March 2002; 167(3): 242-247.

Fingeret M. New Horizons in Glaucoma, Clinical Grand Rounds. [Review of Optometry](#). February 2002.

Richer SP et al. A Clinical Review of Non-Age Related Cataracts. [Optometry](#). December 2001; 72: 767-778.

Spalding JM. Visual-field Loss With Optic Nerve Drusen and Ocular Hypertension: A Case Report. [Optometry](#). January 2002; 73: 24-32.

Calendar

Important dates to remember.

May 5-10, 2002

ARVO, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, <http://www.aoanet.org/corp/happenings-062602.asp>

June 26-30, 2002

AOA Congress, New Orleans, LA, <http://www.aoanet.org/corp/happenings-062602.asp>

July 10-14, 2002

Florida Optometric Association Meeting, Orlando, FL, <http://www.floridaeyes.org/>

September 11-14, 2002

Vision Expo West, Las Vegas, NV, <http://vision.reedexpo.com/west/mainmenu.asp>

October 20-23, 2002

Academy of Ophthalmology, Orlando, FL, <http://www.aao.org/aaoweb1/Meetings/11360.cfm>

October 26-27, 2002

VISN 8 CE Meeting, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. 8 Hours of COPE and TQ. All VA O.D.s are invited. The educational fee is waved for the first 50 registrants before July 1, 2002.

Contact: joseph.molinari@med.va.gov

December 12-16 2002

AAO Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, <http://www.aaopt.org/meetings/meeting3/index.asp>

Internet Links

Suggested web sites.

JOURNALS

Archives of Ophthalmology, <http://archopht.ama-assn.org/>

American Journal of Ophthalmology, <http://www.ajo.com/>

British Journal of Ophthalmology, <http://bjo.bmjournals.com/contents-by-date.0.shtml>

Clinical and Experimental Optometry, <http://www.optometrists.asn.au/ceo/ceo.html>

Ocular Surgery News, <http://www.osnsupersite.com/>

Ophthalmology, <http://www.aaojournal.org/>

Primary Care Optometry News, <http://www.slackinc.com/eye/pcon/pconhome.asp>

Review of Optometry, <http://www.revoptom.com/>

Review of Ophthalmology, <http://www.revophth.com/>

MISCELLANEOUS

Medscape Ophthalmology, <http://www.medscape.com/ophthalmologyhome> (UPDATED)

Ophthoguide, <http://www.ophthoguide.com/ophtho/>

OphthoLinx, <http://www.ophtholinx.com/>

ORGANIZATIONS

American Academy of Optometry (AAO), <http://www.aaopt.org/>

American Academy of Ophthalmology, <http://www.aao.org/>

American Optometric Association (AOA), <http://www.aonet.org/>

National Association of VA Optometrists (NAVAO), <http://www.navao.org/>

National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO), <http://www.optometry.org/>

National Eye Institute (NEI), <http://www.nei.nih.gov/>

Optometry Residency Matching Service (ORMS), <http://www.optometryresident.org/>

VA Optometry Service, <http://www.va.gov/optsvc/index.htm>

EDUCATIONAL (NEW)

Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, <http://129.171.73.73/prod06.htm>

Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, <http://www.djo.harvard.edu/GRhome.html>

Optcom Grand Rounds, <http://www.optcom.com/dgr.html>

Oxford University, <http://www.mrcophth.com/oxfordpd.htm>

Wilmer Eye Institute, <http://www.wilmer.jhu.edu/training/profound/ROUNDS.HTM>

Common Cases and MCQs, <http://www.mrcophth.com/commonshortcasesindex1.html>

Eye Atlas, <http://www.eyeatlas.com/>

Open Positions

Positions available within the VA.

Albuquerque, NM 2 Positions FT, Kathy Halverson 505-265-1711x4228

Columbia, MO 1 Position 0.3 PT, Debbie Hettler: 573-814-6575

East Orange, NJ 1 Position FT, Janis White: janis.white@med.va.gov

El-Paso, TX 1 Position FT, Susan Parks: slparks@hotmail.com

Las Vegas, NV 1 Position FT, Shirley Monzo: 702-636-3000x3123

Los Angeles, CA 1 Position FT, David Bright 310-268-3332

Poplar Bluff, MO 1 Position FT, Paul Varner 573-778-4303

San Francisco, CA 1 Position FT, Bernard Dolan 415-221-4810x2683

Shreveport, LA 1 Position FT, Terence Whatley 318-841-4744

Whichita, KS 1 Position FT, Michelle Call 316-685-2221x3418

For More Information, contact Valerie Jarrard at: valerie.jarrard@med.va.gov

Miscellaneous Information

• NAVAO Board Members

President: Gerald Selvin, O.D., gerald.selvin@med.va.gov

Vice President: Alyon Wasik, O.D., alyon.wasik@med.va.gov

Secretary: Michael White, O.D., michael.white5@med.va.gov

Treasurer: Thomas Golis, O.D., thomas.golis@med.va.gov

Newsletter Editor: John Spalding, O.D., john.spalding@med.va.gov

Membership: Rebecca Sterner, O.D., rebecca.sterner@med.va.gov

- **NAVAO Membership**

If you are interested in becoming a member of NAVAO, please send \$40 to NAVAO, Attention: Barb Nahlik, 1034 S. Brentwood Suite #300, St. Louis, MO 63117.

- **VA Optometry Mentor Program**

If you are interested in being a mentor to a newly hired VA optometrist, please contact Dr. Rebecca Sterner: rebecca.sterner@med.va.gov. Each newly hired VA optometrist will be given a list of mentors and VISN Consultants to contact should the need arise.

- **NAVAO Recruitment and Retention Survey**

Please complete the survey by Monday, April 22. The web address and password for the website and survey have been e-mailed to NAVAO members. For additional information, contact Larry Bennet: loren.bennett@med.va.gov

- **Newsletter Publication Dates**

January 15th

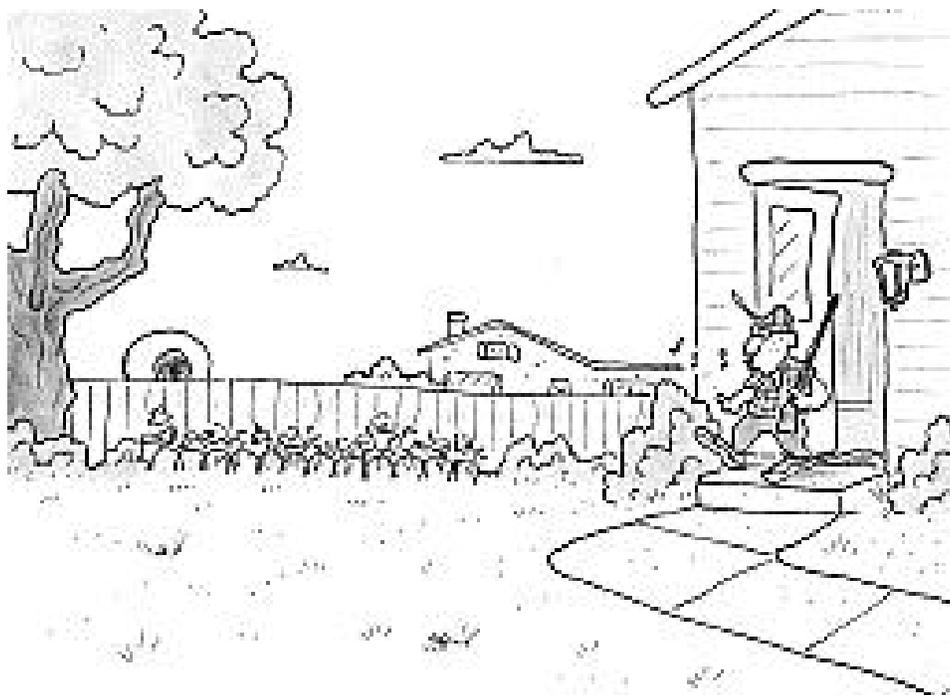
April 15th

July 15th

October 15th

- **Content Submissions / Suggestions**

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One fine Spring day, little Joey set out with his air rifle.
Used with permission of David Farley.