

# BACKBONE

*a publication of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society*

Volume 14

Summer 2011

## President's Corner

*William G. Cimino, M.D. - President*

*(Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from Dr. Cimino's inaugural address presented at the Society's Annual Meeting on May 13, 2011.)*



Thank you for the opportunity and the privilege to serve as the next President of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society. I would like to thank Dr. Brian Smith, the immediate past president, for his time and dedication to our colleagues.

I am truly honored to be standing here in anticipation of working at the next level with this prolific organization. Admittedly, I am somewhat apprehensive, knowing the challenges that lie before us during this critical era of

change in the American healthcare system.

Over the past several years, I have had the opportunity to serve as a board member and as an executive officer. During that time, I have worked alongside mentors who have a passion for this Society, and who have taken extreme pride in its landmark successes.

I owe a special thanks to past President and past Connecticut Orthopaedist of the Year, Dr. Robert Green, whose infectious enthusiasm has fueled my continued interest, and who has encouraged me and many others to stay involved.

As put forth in our Mission Statement, it is our purpose to promote, encourage, foster, and advance the art and science of Orthopaedic surgery in the state, and the delivery of quality medical care in the best interests of the patient community. Our efforts have always remained true to this mission, and will continue forward with this purpose as its driving force. The role of this organization and its importance for patients, all practicing physicians in this state, and the two Orthopaedic residency programs cannot be overstated.

Your Society has always maintained patient advocacy at the core, and the battles we engage attempt to maintain patient's rights.

Your Society has increased the educational venues offered to the membership well beyond this annual meeting to include a variety of programs ranging from coding courses to contracting seminars.

Your Society has offered significant support to both the University of Connecticut and the Yale residency programs since 2003, including contributions to facilitate resident education and research, which thus far have totaled \$80,000.

Your Society is always covering your backside and those of your patients. We are actively involved in confronting managed care companies and some of their egregious practices which compromise patient access to care as well as our ability to care for them.

Our committed members unselfishly dedicate their time and resources to fighting the legislative and regulatory battles that will hopefully allow us to continue to enjoy the privilege of practicing medicine in a reasonable environment.

Going forward, our agenda will include continuing these efforts at both the state and federal levels. These include but are not limited to affordable access to care, the effort to bring forth collective bargaining for physicians, and meaningful tort reform.

I will not elaborate on the specifics of the individual battles that are being waged on your behalf, or those dedicating their time to such efforts. Many of these details can be found in our Society's quarterly newsletter, BACKBONE. However, the efforts of one Connecticut Orthopaedist, COS board member and AAOS Councilor Dr. Michael Connair, deserves very special recognition.

*(cont. on p. 3)*

# Annual Meeting Highlights

## Orthopaedist of the Year

The Connecticut Orthopaedic Society honored C. Robert Biondino, MD, posthumously, with the Society's 2011 Orthopaedist of the Year award. Dr. Biondino (affectionately referred to as Dr. B) was selected by his peers for his leadership role in medicine, dedication to the practice of orthopaedic surgery and active participation in the field of organized medicine in Connecticut. His wife, Mrs. Sharon Biondino was joined by their daughter, Alysha Havrilla in accepting the award. A proclamation from the State of Connecticut was also presented by Senator Terry Gerratana and Dr. Frank Gerratana who arranged for the honor.

Dr. Biondino's noteworthy contributions and longstanding commitment to his colleagues and his patients earned him the respect of many. He was passionate about the practice of medicine, compassionate with his patients and had a wonderful generosity of spirit that embraced all he knew. His longtime friend and colleague, Robert A. Green, MD, honored his accomplishments in a touching tribute.

Dr. Biondino served with distinction as President of the Society from 2007 to 2009. During his tenure and time he served on the Society's Board, he was committed to his profession, his colleagues and his patients. Under his leadership, he developed a working group to address on call emergency room coverage issues to improve the coordination of care for patients. It was his insight, focus and determination that led to the development of a Society On Call Policy. He stressed the importance of common courtesy and collegiality among his physician peers and urged all to do what was best for patients.

Dr. Biondino was a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon in Wallingford, CT and on staff at Midstate Medical Center where he served as Chief of Orthopaedics. He served in the U.S. Navy as an officer and a physician and was a proud and active alum of Princeton University. Dr. Biondino received his medical degree from New Jersey College of Medicine and completed his orthopaedic residency at Hartford Hospital in Hartford, Connecticut.

He leaves a legacy of compassion and joy to all that knew him and the Society encourages its members to honor his memory with a contribution to the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society Foundation and/or the C. Robert Biondino Scholarship Fund. (Please email [ctorthoexec@gmail.com](mailto:ctorthoexec@gmail.com) or call 860-690-1146 for details).

*Robert A. Green, MD (right) presents Mrs. Sharon Biondino (center) and daughter Alysha Havrilla (left) with the Orthopaedist of the Year award in memory of C. Robert Biondino, MD, at the Annual Meeting on May 13, 2011.*



*Photo Courtesy of Frank Gerratana, MD.*

## Yale & UConn Resident Paper Awards



*Photo Courtesy of Frank Gerratana, MD.*

*Recipients, Alan Dang, MD -UConn (left) and Connor Telles, MD - Yale (right) with President, William G. Cimino, MD (center) at the Society's Annual Meeting on May 13, 2011.*

Residents from each of Connecticut's orthopaedic residency programs presented papers at the Annual Meeting on May 13, 2011. Resident Papers were selected by the heads of each residency program.

The following were presented:

**University of Connecticut - "Effects of Adding Epinephrine to Arthroscopic Irrigation Fluid on Cultured Chondrocyte Survival In Vitro"** Presenter : Alan Dang, MD. Authors: Alan Dang, MD, Mary Beth McCarthy, BS, Alexis Dang, MD, David Chowanec, BS and Augustus Mazzocca, MD.

**Yale - "Neck Motion due to the Halo Vest in Prone and Supine Positions"** Presenter: Connor Telles, MD. Authors: Connor Telles, MD and Paul Ivancic, Ph.D.

The Society is pleased to support the active participation of orthopaedic residents in order to foster relationships, communication and commitment to organized medicine.

# President's Corner

*(cont. from front page)*

For the last decade, Dr. Connair has been the driving force for collective bargaining and antitrust relief for physicians.

Recently, in large part due to his efforts, a legislative bill in Washington, DC entitled "HR 1409 Collective Bargaining Relief" has been drafted and dropped for legislative action in 2011.

This one piece of legislation, if passed, will be the single most important piece of legislation for physicians since the advent of organized medicine. It will allow us, as advocates for our profession and our patients, to have an assertive and unified voice at the table with insurers and others in the industry, ensuring fairness in contracting and guaranteeing the continued access to and delivery of quality medical care.

The Connecticut Orthopaedic Society has made enormous strides in the past several years in terms of organizational and financial stabilization, ensuring the long-term viability of this organization. We have been an effective force influencing the political processes that govern the practice of medicine in or state.

The Academy has recognized our accomplishments. In 2006, we were named the State Society of the Year. In 2010, our Executive Director, Susan Schaffman, received the Executive Director of the Year award.

But this is no time to rest on our laurels. The issues before us at this time are so critical to the continued viability of the practice of medicine under favorable terms that activism is the only weapon that has a chance of diverting a course of change that will be acceptable for both physicians and their patients. A posture of indifference or indecisiveness cannot be accepted, and will contribute to the demise of our healthcare system.

The time is now to become a more active member in the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society and I am extending an open invitation to all of you here and your colleagues.

Please, get involved and commit to staying involved. We need you now more than ever to join our unified front. There is always an open seat at our table, and your presence and contributions will always be welcome.

Thank You.

# Annual Meeting Highlights



*Photo Courtesy of Frank Gerratana, MD.*

*Honorary Member William Malitsky (right) accepts his award from Society President, William G. Cimino, MD (left). The award was presented at the May 13, 2011, Connecticut Orthopaedic Society's Annual Meeting.*

## 2011 Honorary Member of Society

Mr. William Malitsky was awarded honorary membership by the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society at the Society's Annual Meeting on Friday, May 13, 2011, at the Farmington Marriott.

Mr. Malitsky was nominated by Members of the Board for his years of determination and limitless energy walking the halls of the State Legislature each session to protect and defend the practice and profession of medicine and the patients of Connecticut.

The award was presented by Society President, William G. Cimino, M.D., who highlighted his intelligence and good nature which has garnered him friendships at the Capitol where he has earned the respect of many. Dr. Cimino noted that it was these very relationships play an integral role in advancing the Society's legislative agenda and protecting the practice of medicine in the regulatory arena.

Mr. Malitsky is a graduate of Southern Connecticut State University where he earned a BS in Political Science and is a key lobbyist with Halloran & Sage in Hartford, CT. He resides in Hebron with his wife and two children.

Honorary membership is conferred by the Board of Directors to any individual or individuals who serve or contribute to the advancement of orthopaedic surgeons in Connecticut.

*The Backbone is a publication of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society. Articles and letters from physicians are merely the opinions of the authors and not of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society and publication is not an endorsement of any opinion. Comments and suggestions should be directed to:*

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email: [ctorthoexec@gmail.com](mailto:ctorthoexec@gmail.com)

## Thanks to Our Exhibitors

The Connecticut Orthopaedic Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the companies who took part in the Annual Meeting on May 13, 2011.

### **MAJOR EXHIBITORS**

Apple Rehab  
Genzyme Biosurgery  
Stryker Orthopaedics

### **MAIN EXHIBITORS**

4 U Doctor/PSS Medical  
Auxilium Pharmaceuticals  
CoActiv Medical Ortho-PACS/  
Parker Xray  
Covidien  
CMIC  
MedAid/Pfizer  
ProMutual Group  
Salient Surgical Technologies  
Smith & Nephew  
Synthes  
Thayer

### **GENERAL EXHIBITORS**

Angiotech  
ArthroCare/Innova SG Corp  
Britanny Farms Health Center  
Cadence Pharmaceuticals  
Corflex  
DePuy Mitek  
Ethicon Products  
Eli Lilly & Company  
Globus Medical  
Henry Schein Medical  
Innovative Medical Products  
KCI  
King Pharmaceuticals  
Linear Medical Solutions  
MicroAire Surgical  
Instruments  
O.R. Specialties, Inc.  
Ortho-McNeil-Janssen  
Pharmaceuticals  
SRS Soft  
Synvasive Technology  
U.S. Army Health Care  
Recruiting  
Zimmer New England

*SPECIAL THANKS TO SMITH BROTHERS  
INSURANCE FOR CO-HOSTING BREAK-  
FAST*

# 2011 Legislative Wrap Up

At the close of Connecticut's 2011 legislative session in early June, the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society's initiative to obtain legislation that would guarantee payment of precertified/preauthorized services and procedures was passed.

Spearheaded two years ago by Drs. F. Scott Gray, Robert A. Green and Frank J. Gerratana, they continued to push for this legislation along with the unwavering work by COS Lobbyist, William Malitsky. As a result, HB 6308 AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTHCARE REFORM, includes the Society's major initiative for preauthorization language to guarantee payment for services/procedures that have been preauthorized. This bill also ensures many other benefits for physicians in Connecticut including timely payments of electronic claims, ban on future product clauses and increased regulations for third party administrators and utilization review companies.

In the final hours of the session, the proposed changes to the Certificate of Merit statute, HB 6487, that would've eliminated important thresholds in the med mal complaint process, did not come up for a vote. The bill was vehemently opposed by the Society in written testimony by Dr. Michael Marks (COS Past President) and with letters and phone calls to key Representatives and Senators. Many thanks to those physicians who made calls and the collective effort of Connecticut medical specialty societies, state medical society and our lobbyist. This bill had strong support going into the final days of the legislature however, with Sen. Terry Gerratana breaking ranks with the debate on the floor ensuing and eventually ending at the close of session with no action taken.

A scope of practice bill proposed by Athletic Trainers which would have significantly expanded their scope to include preventative care, E & M, casting and more, was opposed by the Society with Dr. Michael Aronow representing his orthopaedic colleagues at a legislative meeting. The Society provided legislators with scope statutes in other states as well as the educational curriculum of athletic trainers. This information illustrated the stringent oversight statute in neighboring states and a lack of education and training to support the scope expansion, and the bill died in committee.

The Society provided testimony on key bills and joined forces with other medical specialties to support Collective Bargaining, Truth in Advertising, Medical Loss Ratio Caps, Prohibiting Most Favored Nation Clauses and opposing any provider tax legislation introduced. We also supported the Connecticut College of Emergency Room physicians' legislation that would enhance access to ER care and help control cost by enacting significant medical malpractice reform for EMTALA providers.

Many of these issues will be back in 2012 and your Society will continue to work on behalf of all orthopaedic surgeons. We urge EACH of you to take an active role in legislation that impacts your practice, your patients and the delivery of healthcare in our State. If you would like additional information on the bills or would like to sign up to be part of future grassroots legislative action, please contact the Society at [www.ctorthoexec@gmail.com](http://www.ctorthoexec@gmail.com) or phone 860-690-1146.

# Society News

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## *New Officers Elected*

The members of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society elected new officers for 2011-2013 at its Annual Meeting held at the Marriott Hotel in Farmington, Connecticut on May 13, 2011.

**William G. Cimino, MD,** was elected to serve as President of the Society. Dr. Cimino, a University of Notre Dame alum, received his medical degree from the University of Nebraska Medical Center. He completed his orthopaedic surgery residency at the San Francisco Orthopedic Residency Program in California and continued his education with a Fellowship in Foot and Ankle Reconstruction at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York. Dr. Cimino is the founder of Beach Road Orthopaedic Specialists, Fairfield, Connecticut, is active in various professional organizations and serves on the medical staff at Bridgeport Hospital and St. Vincent's Medical Center. He resides in Fairfield with his wife, Maria and daughter.

Elected as Vice President/President-Elect was **Ross A. Benthien, MD,** a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon in practice with Orthopaedic Associates of Hartford. Dr. Benthien received his medical degree, with distinction and Master's in Public Health from George Washington University and completed his orthopaedic residency at University of Connecticut, where he now serves as Assistant Clinical Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery. Dr. Benthien completed a Fellowship in Foot and Ankle at Mercy and Union Memorial Hospitals in Baltimore and is on the medical staff at Hartford Hospital and Orthopaedic Associates of Hartford Surgery Center. Dr. Benthien resides in West Hartford with his wife and four children.

**F.Scott Gray, MD,** was elected Secretary/Treasurer for the Society. Dr. Gray is a founding partner of Connecticut Family Orthopedics in Danbury and is a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon. He is the former Orthopaedic Trauma Coordinator at Danbury Hospital and serves on many professional organizations. Dr. Gray received his medical degree from Georgetown University Medical School and completed his orthopaedic residency at Tufts New England Medical Center in Massachusetts. Dr. Gray, father of seven, resides in Ridgefield with his wife Cantor Deborah Katchko-Gray.

## *Legal Counsel - A Benefit for Members*

The Connecticut Orthopaedic Society is pleased to announce that it has retained the law firm of Meiselman, Denlea, Packman, Carton & Eberz, P.C. as its General Counsel. For over 35 years, Meiselman Denlea has successfully represented physicians and other health care providers in litigation, transactional and regulatory matters. The firm's Health Care Group has a national reputation for being strong advocates of and securing the best results for its physician clients.

Its attorneys have specifically assisted numerous orthopaedic practices on a myriad of issues including creating successful joint ventures, protecting their intellectual property, defending them in fraud audits and disciplinary investigations, and the firm has also filed class action lawsuits on their behalf to change how insurance companies reimburse orthopedic surgeons for their procedures.

Meiselman, Denlea will make itself available to our Society and its members, and will offer personal services to our members at a discount. Barry B. Cepelewicz, M.D., Esq. is Chair of the firm's Health Care Group. He can be reached at (914) 517-5000, or [bcepelewicz@mdpcelaw.com](mailto:bcepelewicz@mdpcelaw.com),

## *Annual Meeting Overview*

More than 130 orthopaedic surgeons attended the Society's Annual Meeting on May 13, 2011. Dr. Michael Kaplan, Program Director, assembled an impressive line up of speakers which drew orthopaedic surgeons, UConn and Yale residents, physician assistants and honored guests to the day long event.

Special thanks to the speakers who shared their clinical expertise and research findings including *Michael Ries, MD* - Chief Arthroplasty Service at University of California San Francisco, CA; *Robert Trousdale, MD* - Department of Orthopedic Surgery Mayo Clinic - Rochester, MN; *Bruce McCormack, MD* - Neurospine Institute - San Francisco, CA; *Stephen O'Brien, MD* - Vice Chairman, Sports Medicine, Hospital for Special Surgery-NY; *Augustus Mazzocca, MD* - Director of Orthopaedic Resident Education, University of Connecticut - Farmington, CT; *Chris Chiodo, MD* - Chief Foot and Ankle Division, Brigham & Womens' Hospital - Boston, MA; *Major Thomas Baier, MD* - U.S. Army Reserve Surgeon, IL and; *Tricia Marriott, PAC* - Director, Reimbursement Policy - American Academy of Physician Assistants - New Haven, CT.

Thank you to all who attended. Please share your feedback by emailing [ctorthoexec@gmail.com](mailto:ctorthoexec@gmail.com) and don't miss the photos made available to you by Dr. Frank Gerratana <http://5.gallery.me.com/ghmc/100669>

# Society Seeks Your Participation in Survey

On behalf of the CT Orthopaedic Society Board, we are seeking your participation in a study being conducted by the Society to evaluate reasons imaging studies are requested by Orthopaedic Surgeons in Connecticut. To date there has been only one prospective study (from the state of Pennsylvania in 2010) that has assessed reasons orthopaedic surgeons order radiology tests. The Board of the COS strongly feels that more prospective information is necessary so that we can help to answer the true cost/incidence of imaging studies that are performed for reasons other than clinical.

We are asking you to fill out the information below and complete the table on the back for 100 patients when you order one of the following imaging studies – x-ray, MRI, CT, Ultra Sound or Bone Scan. You will need to document:

- Body Part Imaged
- Image Modality Ordered
- Reason for Ordering the Test
- Location of Patient Visit

We greatly appreciate your participation in this study and the valuable information that it will provide. While your reports and identity will be kept confidential, our Executive Director Sue Schaffman or the residents on the COS Board may be in contact with you to facilitate data collection. Your collection of data should begin asap and completed forms submitted by August 1st. Please send data either email to Sue Schaffman, Executive Director of COS at [ctorthoexec@gmail.com](mailto:ctorthoexec@gmail.com), fax results to 860-561-5514 or mail to: 26 Riggs Ave., West Hartford, CT 06107. Final results will be distributed to the membership.

Thank you for taking the time to share your information. If you have any questions, please contact Brian Smith at [brian.g.smith@yale.edu](mailto:brian.g.smith@yale.edu) or Susan Schaffman at 860.690.1146.

## CT Ortho Society 2011 Purpose of Imaging Study

Zip Code in which you practice \_\_\_\_\_

Years in Practice \_\_\_\_\_

Orthopaedic Subspeciality if any? \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

Hospital Employed Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

How many times have you been litigated against? \_\_\_\_ When was the last date litigation was brought against you? \_\_\_\_

Date Study Started \_\_\_\_\_

Date Study Ended \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** In the table printed on adjacent page(make copies before starting), please mark down for each image ordered: The type of imaging ordered, the body part imaged, and check the column next to each order that applies. Please record data for consecutive patients. Copy additional sheets as necessary. Under Insurance requirement, is the test ordered because they won't let you for example operate without the MRI.

# 2011 Imaging Study - Data Sheet

Imaging Modality Ordered (Please Circle)	Body Part Imaged (knee, L-spine, femur, etc)	Required for Clinical Care	Ordered because the patient requested	Ordered for defensive reasons	Ordered Due to Insurance Requirement	Locale
Xray MRI CT US Bone Scan						INPATIENT OFFICE EMERGENCY ROOM
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