

◆ Highlights of the 51st Annual Meeting: “A Climate for Change” Vancouver, 16–20 May 2008

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2008 Program Committee**

The excitement of preparing the program for Vancouver came particularly from the recognition that planned sessions and the keynote and plenary lectures contained some obvious and subtle signposts for substantial changes in the future of everything from our planet to some fundamentals in scientific publishing.

The prospect of a less diverse world was highlighted in the keynote address by polar bear expert Ian Stirling, who provided compelling and disturbing evidence that northern climate change may have serious, if not permanent, effects on an iconic species of the Arctic. His vivid illustrations of this northern mammal in its native environment were poignant and sobering and provided a suitable kickoff of the meeting. University of British Columbia (UBC) medical geneticist Michael Hayden pointed to the effectiveness of active adverse-drug-reaction (ADR) surveillance networks for ADR reporting and drug-safety biomarker research. Design of the network can lead to targeted surveillance of specific drugs or of ADRs of principal concern. This research seems ready to move into the clinical stage. Blake Godkin used his architect’s perspective (the profession must look to the long- and medium-term future) to suggest some radical ways in which the editing community can try to prepare for the uncertain future that is inherent in scientific research.

The concurrent sessions were very well attended (the Hooky Desk was not much used to escape from the sessions!), and feedback was uniformly on the positive side. The small number of

no-shows among the speakers was gratifying. Thanks go particularly to moderators, whose efforts encouraged vigorous and constructive discussions during and after presentations.

The meeting included the First Annual CSE Poster Session. The winning posters were “Editorial Rejections and Country of Origin in a Peer-Reviewed Medical Journal” by Rebecca S Benner and Heidi Logothetti and “Editors’ Practices in Detection of Duplicate Publication, Plagiarism, and Manipulation of Data and Images” by Margaret Winker.

Two major directions for CSE’s future emerged. First, Council members have particular talents, revealed in the AuthorAID and EditorLink sessions, that should be harnessed for a long-term communal commitment to support young authors and small-journal editors. Second, there is a genuine interest in making CSE more accessible to small journals, especially in countries where authors and editors are less privileged than those in the “Western world”.

I hope that most of the slide presentations will find their way onto the CSE Web site. Seth Beckerman works tirelessly to make materials available and accessible.

It was sad and embarrassing for the Canadian hosts that two of the CSE



PHOTO BY JOHN WACHTER, CPS MEDIA

Iain Taylor and Cheryl Iverson

2008 International Scholars were denied Canadian entry visas to attend the meetings. Both were told that the reasons were “political”. Let us hope that such denial of access does not recur.

The offsite highlight was the Bill Reid exhibition that opened in a gallery a block from the hotel a week before our meeting. All who visited the exhibition were amazed by the beauty of Reid’s art in paint, metal, and wood. For those who heard about the thefts from the UBC Museum of Anthropology, the good news is that almost all the items (valued at more than \$15 million) have been recovered, although the culprits have not been apprehended.