



ARKANSAS RADIOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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ARS/ACR Members,

Greetings from your current ARS Executive Committee! We thank you for your support of the American College of Radiology and the State Chapter, the Arkansas Radiological Society. This is our inaugural Chapter Newsletter.

In the past year, the ARS has been busy. Below are some of the initiatives we've accomplished and those in progress:

- The ARS has supported passage of legislation mandating insurance coverage for mammography screening (HB 2022), including Breast tomosynthesis, and in dense breasts, ultrasound screening. ARS members Dr. Gwen Bryant-Smith of UAMS and Dr. Jerry Gehl of RAPA testified in support before state legislators, with testimony from opposing insurers. We prevailed, and the bill was signed into law in March. It went into effect on August 1, 2017.
- In 2016, Arkansas BCBS announced intended substantial reimbursement cuts for radiological services for 2017. The ARS, with support from the Arkansas Medical Society, was successful in convincing Arkansas BCBS not to institute those reductions.
- Recently, Arkansas BCBS announced an upcoming change (January 1, 2019) in provider reimbursement, moving away from fee-for-service toward a merit based, shared savings model. Although some specialties such as Anesthesiology and Pathology are excluded from the new model, Radiology is included. The ARS is already involved in a conversation with BCBS regarding the appropriateness of Radiology's inclusion.
- Beginning in 2015, and continuing today, the ARS, working with Dr. Jim McDonald, Dr. Kedar Jambhekar and others at UAMS organized the Calhoun Fund, a tax-deductible fund for resident education. The primary focus of the fund is to provide sponsorship for all radiology residents to have the opportunity to attend the annual ACR Meeting in Washington DC in May of each year. Thanks to your generous donations, the Calhoun Fund has been able to support this mission in 2016 and 2017.
- Each year, the ARS organizes a CME meeting, varying the topics and location. The 2017 meeting was focused on Musculoskeletal Imaging and was held in Hot Springs - April 1, 2017. Dr. Doug Beall was the featured speaker. Next year's meeting is April 21, 2018 in Bentonville on Breast Imaging. Dr. Mike Linver, a world-famous breast imaging educator will speak, as well as Arkansas radiologists, Dr. Amanda Ferrell and Dr. Stephen Routon. Dr. Gwen Bryant-Smith, Director of Breast Imaging at UAMS will host the meeting. As an added feature, Dr. Geraldine McGinty, Vice-Chair of the ACR's Board of Chancellors will add some ACR leadership perspectives from the national front.
- The ARS leadership has long had concerns that most of the members of the Executive Committee (EC) have been from Central Arkansas. Travel concerns have been an obstacle to meaningful leadership participation from our many members around the state. In May this year, we launched a WebEx teleconferencing format for the EC Meetings. Already, we've been able to engage EC members from Northwest Arkansas, and Searcy more effectively. If you would like to have a voice in ARS leadership, but have been concerned about geographic issues, please let me or another EC member know.
- The ARS has recently been made aware of an upcoming push for an Arkansas Constitutional Amendment for Tort Reform. As you may recall, legislation was passed in 2003 for Tort Reform. That legislation has been systematically dismantled over the years by judicial action and is essentially null and void. The upcoming effort will be for general Tort Reform. The Arkansas Medical Society is strongly supportive of this endeavor, and has asked for support from other medical societies. The ARS EC is supportive as well. We plan to ask for group or individual donations to support this cause. We expect a very strong counter-campaign from Arkansas' lawyers.
- Lastly, the ARS has recognized that a number of practicing radiologists in Arkansas are either not members of the ACR, or are ACR members, but not members of the ARS. We are currently engaged in a membership drive. If you read this, and are not a member of both these organizations, please consider supporting the initiatives above with your membership.

Sincerely,

Scott Harter, MD

President, Arkansas Radiological Society

Vice-President: Sharp Malak, MD * Secretary-Treasurer: Bryan Jennings, MD

Councilors: Sharp Malak, MD * Stephen Penor, MD * Kremer Nicholas, MD Alternate

Councilors: W. Mark White, MD, FACR * David Diment, MD

*** Rajesh Sethi, MD * Stephen Routon, MD**

Fellowship Chair: Kenneth Robbins, MD, FACR