To further the achievements of women practicing thoracic surgery by providing mutual support and facilitating professional advancement

President’s Corner
By Mercedes K.C. Dullum, MD

WTS had another very exciting and productive year in 2003. Thanks to all the efforts by our previous officers and enthusiastic members, WTS has firmly established itself as a leader in the Thoracic Surgery community. Many of our members now serve on major committees and taskforces in our societies, including Carolyn Reed's recent appointment as Vice Chair of the American Board of Thoracic Surgery.

At the 40th Annual STS business meeting in San Antonio, many new women were accepted into membership: 18 new full members, 7 candidate members, and 1 international member. There are now 42 women in Thoracic Surgery residencies out of the approximately total 340 residencies.

In mid-November 2003, WTS leadership held a strategic planning retreat in Washington, D.C. Our intent was to identify the 2004 initiatives for the WTS. During the meeting, the group evaluated the mission of WTS in order to identify the gaps, opportunities, and the best areas to focus the members' attention on during 2004. The following themes emerged during the first day that crossed all four of WTS' goals: value, mentoring, outreach, professional advancement, networking and the website.

These ideas were distilled into two initiatives that would have the most impact and either directly or indirectly further advance all four goals. Action plans were created for: Mentoring Plan and Website development.

The Mentoring Plan will be focused on those individuals who will be completing their residency programs. This will be a near term goal and additional initiatives will be created to expand this focus going forward. Cynthia Herrington (Herri011@umn.edu) is the Chair of the Mentoring Committee.

The current WTS Website (www.wtsnet.org) has undergone tremendous change since its inception. The efforts for 2004 will allow us to add greater value to our members from a content and navigation perspective. Shauna Roberts (RobertsSh@genesishealth.com) is our web site editor and chair of the Web Site Committee.

Our general membership meeting at the STS was very well attended and the minutes can be obtained on the web site. New officers were elected and the members voted to make a contribution of $10,000 to the Thoracic Surgery Foundation for Research and Education, earmarked for the Nina Starr Braunwald Fund. This represents an amount equivalent, based on our membership, to the cumulative per-member amount contributed by the Society of Thoracic Surgeons to the Foundation since its inception.

We look forward to an exciting year of growth and development for the Women in Thoracic Surgery.
Mentoring Program

By Cindi Herrington, MD

Mentoring has been a focus for the Women in Thoracic Surgery since its inception. Active mentoring is one of the four objectives of our mission statement, and is one of the initiatives that came from our strategic planning retreat (November, 2003). Our ideal is to ultimately have a program that spans from early education (high school/college) to retirement. We will begin with women in CVTS training and in their first few years of practice. The program objectives include:

1. identifying Women in Thoracic Surgery members who want to become a mentor,
2. identifying women presently in CVTS training, and offering them Women in Thoracic Surgery membership,
3. adding a resident mentorship page to the website that will list mentors, potential job opportunities, and grant opportunities, and finally,
4. writing a “survival guide” for cardiovascular and thoracic surgery / as we progress in each of these areas, the results of our improvements will be found on the Women in Thoracic Surgery web page.

We have begun the process of identifying mentors. A WTS mentoring commitment survey has been created, and can be found in the Oracle accompanying the dues reminder as well as on the WTS website. This survey allows our members who desire to participate as a mentor to define their areas of expertise. Once these profiles have been collected, they will be placed on the mentoring page of the website. We have also identified the women presently in CVTS training. There are at least 42 female CVTS residents presently in training. Membership applications for the WTS and information about the mentoring program will be sent to them shortly.

Our final objective is to take advantage of our collective experience and create a Women in Thoracic Surgery Guide that will address issues that occur during fellowship training and during those years immediately following training. Examples include an update on the 80 hour work week, preparation for ABTS boards, career planning, contract negotiation, research and career advancement. We are actively in the process of putting information together for publication this summer.

I would invite any active member at Women in Thoracic Surgery to become a mentor for a resident, student or young surgeon. Please, fill out a Women in Thoracic Surgery mentoring commitment. I would also be glad to hear from anyone about any ideas or improvements to the program, as it is in its infancy.

Surgical Specialties in Austria

Preliminary Data of a National Survey

Adelheid End1, Hildegunde Piza2,3

1Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, University of Vienna
2Department of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, University of Innsbruck,
3Ludwig-Boltzmann-Institute for Quality Control in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Austria, Europe

Austria is a small Central European Republic with about 8.1 Mio inhabitants, and an area of 84,000 km² which is half the area of Washington State. It is member of the European Union, and has a well-organized health care system. There are 3 large University Hospitals: the universities in Vienna (=capital with 1.6 Mio citizens), Graz and Innsbruck; and 206 community and private or church-affiliated hospitals. We present a brief history of women surgery in Austria, recent demographics and a summary of the national survey of female surgeons in 2001.

History

The history of Austrian women surgeons started with a delay of more than 50 years after Elizabeth Blackwell and her sister Emily had been pioneers in the field of surgery in America. In Austria, the first known female surgeon was Frieda Barolin, assistant in general surgery at the University Hospital in Vienna in 1914 (Fig. 1). Elisabeth Winkler (plastic surgery) was the first female surgeon to become associate professor in 1962 in Vienna, followed in 1973 by Doris Kronberger-Schönecker in Graz (general surgery). In 1976 a pediatric surgical division was put under the leadership of Gesine Menardi (University of Innsbruck).

(continues on page 3)
Surgical Specialties in Austria (cont. from page 2)

Freyja Smolle-Juettner was the first to reach the position of associate professor in thoracic surgery in Graz in 1988. Hildegunde Piza was the first woman to be offered a chair (full professorship) and to be appointed head of a university department (plastic surgery in Innsbruck). Fig. 2 shows the 6 units out of a total of 231 surgical departments headed by female surgeons, and the dates of their appointments.

Demographic details
Today there are 34,400 licensed medical doctors, 1,200 (3.5 %) of whom are general surgeons. As of 2001, there are 130 female board-certified general surgeons in Austria, representing 10.5 % of the total; but there are only a few women in cardiothoracic and vascular surgery (Fig. 3). The percentages of female surgeons in the subspecialities - pediatric, plastic and reconstructive, general and trauma surgery - are 27 %, 18.7 %, 10 % and 4.7 %, respectively. Their numbers are steadily increasing (1).

National survey
In 2001 a national survey was conducted of all 351 living female surgeons. The response rate was 58.7 %; mean age was 40 years (24 to 78 years). The main surgical specialties were general (51.6 %), trauma (24.5 %), pediatric (9.4 %), plastic and reconstructive surgery (8.3 %), cardiothoracic and vascular surgery (6.2 %). We chose these specialties because of their high operative volume in Austria. 58 % were certified, and 42 % were in training (Fig. 4). 281 women were active surgeons at the time of the survey, 25 were on maternal leave, 11 had retired, and 44 had left surgery. About 34 % of all women worked in Vienna. Only 11 of the 351 women surgeons held or are currently holding a higher academic position, the “venia docendi” which corresponds to associate or full professorships.

The majority of female surgeons are working in community hospitals (Fig. 5). The survey included sociodemographic variables, profession and career, family life and partnership (2). Overall professional satisfaction was assessed on a five-point scale (1 very satisfied, 5 dissatisfied). The results in the group of active women surgeons are shown in Fig. 6. Pediatric and plastic surgeons are mostly very satisfied with their job (scale 1+2), followed by trauma, and finally by general surgeons. The number of active cardiothoracic and vascular surgeons, who responded to the survey, is small (n=10), the degree of satisfaction, however, is generally quite high.

Summary
Cardiothoracic surgery is a relatively young discipline in Austria with only a few female cardiothoracic surgeons being certified. There are 3 University Hospitals in Austria - Vienna, Graz and Innsbruck - where cardiothoracic surgery is practised. Besides, there are about five community hospitals with departments of cardiac and/or thoracic surgery. Although the number of women surgeons has been rising in the surgical subspecialties over the past years, female cardiothoracic surgeons still constitute a small number. Further analysis of the study will give insight into the self-perception of the surgical profession.

References
1 Austrian Medical Association 2001
2 End A, Piza H: National survey of women surgeons in Austria - Unpublished data 2001
Moving Ahead

Leslie J. Kohman, MD has been appointed as the next Chair of the Surgery Committee of Cancer and Leukemia Group B. She is a Professor of Surgery SUNY - Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse. Beyond this, she has had extensive experience working with CALGB most recently completing a term as the Chair of the NCI Subcommittee H. This is a very prestigious position as she assumes full responsibility from David Sugarbaker, MD who chaired the Surgery Committee for over ten years. Congratulations to Dr. Leslie Kohman!

Carolyn Reed, MD has been appointed to Chair the American Board of Thoracic Surgeons.

More women are choosing Thoracic Surgery. This is the first year in which we have ‘double digit’ residents. There are currently 42 women in residencies out of a total of 340. Many women were accepted into the Society of Thoracic Surgeons membership including 18 Full Members, 7 Candidate Members and 1 International Member.

See you in April in Toronto at AATS.!

Thank You!

Once again, Anita Bessler of Edwards has graciously sponsored the WTS Luncheon. We appreciate the consistent support of our industry colleagues. These meetings afford us an opportunity to network with our colleagues and are a building block for WTS.

San Antonio STS Annual Luncheon Meeting of WTS
The recent EACTS/ESTS meeting
(Vienna, October 2003) was marked
by the first organized meeting of the
European women surgeons. Adelheid
End, MD, a thoracic surgeon at the
University of Vienna, organized and
ran the meeting. Twelve women
surgeons attended the meeting to
discuss what direction the European
organization wants to address the serious
professional (politics, training,
committee work, professional
development) and academic concerns.
They also are interested in having at
least one woman attend our WTS
meetings here in the States (at the
annual STS or AATS meetings). We
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our colleagues during the coming year.

European Association of Cardio Thoracic
Surgeons meeting in Vienna at the
Women in Thoracic Surgery Luncheon
Photo by Brigid Scanlan Eiynck of
Scanlan International, Inc.

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MOVING AHEAD!
Carolyn Reed, MD, is the new
Chair of the American Board of
Thoracic Surgeons. We
congratulate her on this
leadership role in our profession.

WTS Supports TSRF
WTS has contributed $10,000.00
to the Nina Braunwald
Scholarship Fund of the Thoracic
Surgery Research Foundation.
This is done on behalf and
through the support of all the
members of WTS. It reflects our
commitment to the advancement
of our specialty and the
advancement of women as
Thoracic Surgeons.

WTS Leadership
At the annual meeting in
San Antonio, these new leaders
were inducted:

Vice-President -
Margarita Camacho

Chair, Mentoring Committee -
Cindy Herrington

Chair, International
Member’s Committee -
Carolyn Dresler

Board Members -
Mary J. Boylan, Nora Burgess,
Carolyn Dresler,
Shauna Roberts

Board Member at Large -
Yolanda Colson

WTS Website
Remember to visit our website at
www.wtsnet.org

Women In Thoracic Surgery
Luncheon Attendees
Vienna Austria
Monday, October 13, 2003

Kalliopi Athanassiadi, MD
Greece

Monica Casiraghi, MD
Columbo, Italy

Tina Peters, MD
Klinekum Braunschweig,
Germany

Sandie Fraund, MD
Keil, Germany

Carin Van Doorn, MD
London, England

Flavia Sorrentio, MD
Pisa, Italy

Franca Melfi, MD
Pisa, Italy

Claudia Ghiribelli, MD
Siena, Italy

Kathleen Fenton, MD
Omaha, NE, USA

Adelheid End, MD
Vienna, Austria

Ina C. Ennker, MD
Lahr Baden, Germany

Paola Ciriacco, MD
Milan, Italy

Nicoletta Salvito, MD
Sicily, Italy

Women in Thoracic Surgery
would like to thank our partners
in industry for the support they
have given over the years:
Scanlan International,
Edwards LifeSciences,
Medtronic, and Guidant.
Women in Thoracic Surgery (WTS) is an international organization of thoracic surgeons whose purpose is to:

- Provide quality care to our patients
- Mentor young women interested in pursuing careers in thoracic/cardiac surgery
- Provide educational opportunities for our members
- Educate the public, especially women, regarding cardiac and pulmonary health and disease

Women in Thoracic Surgery

To further the achievements of women practicing thoracic surgery by providing mutual support and facilitating professional advancement

WTS Website: www.wtsnet.org

President: Mercedes K.C. Dullum
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2004 WTS OFFICERS

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106 - 4th Street East
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Women in Thoracic Surgery Mentoring Commitment

At the completion of the recent Women in Thoracic Surgery strategic planning retreat, creating an active mentorship program was placed at the top of our priority list. We have now begun to create the infrastructure necessary for this program. We will begin by focusing on those women presently in training and those just recently out of training. Our hopes are that this program will expand to include young women in college and medical school up and through their career and retirement.

We are developing a residents’ page on the WTS website where interested parties can come and find WTS members interested in mentoring. I would ask you to take a few moments to answer the following questions and become an active mentor for the Women in Thoracic Surgery.

- Yes, I would like to be listed on the resident’s page as a WTS mentor.
- Name __________________________________________________________

1) My practice is best defined as (please select more than one):
   - Cardiac
   - Thoracic
   - Congenital/Pediatric
   - Heart Failure/transplant
   - Academic
   - Private practice
   - HMO practice
   - Research
   - Industry

2) The areas that I would feel comfortable giving advice and mentoring (please select more than one):
   - Surviving CV training
   - Preparing for Boards
   - Curriculum vitae preparation
   - Job search
   - Career planning
   - Interviewing techniques
   - Negotiating contracts
   - Further training opportunities
   - Research/grant writing
   - Crisis intervention
   - Personal balance
   - Legal crises
   - J visual/FMG issues

3) The level of mentoring that I would feel comfortable with (please select more than one):
   - College students
   - Medical students
   - General surgery residents
   - Cardiovascular and thoracic fellows
   - Junior faculty
   - Established CVTS faculty

4) How would you prefer to be contacted:
   - By email ______________________________________________________________________________
   - By professional phone ___________________________________________________________________

Any suggestions you may have for the mentoring program:
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Please email to Herri011@umn.edu or Fax to 612-625-4106 attention Cynthia Herrington
Thank you
2004
Membership Dues Invoice
(January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004)

Name:____________________________________________________________________________________
Hospital/Institution: ________________________________________________________________________
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Phone:(best way to reach you):____________________________________________________________
E-Mail address:____________________________________________________________________________

Do you want your mail sent to your home or office? _______
Do you mind if we publish your e-mail address in our newsletter? ________

Dues:

Active membership: ...............................................................$100
Institutional membership:.......................................................$350
Associate membership (GS or TS resident): ..................No fee (circle GS or TS)
    If you are a GS, TS resident or fellow, please state your year of training _____________
Emeritus membership (Retired from practice, or > 70 YO): ..No fee
Honorary membership:.............................................................................No fee

Optional: Donation to the Nina Braunwald Scholarship Fund through the TSFRE $___________

Please remit to
    Lorraine J. Rubis, M.D.
    106-4th Street East
    St. Petersburg, FL 33715-2241

Thank you for your support. Visit our website: www.WTSnet.org