



# 2021 Winter/Spring Newsletter

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## Table of Contents

- I. [Editor's Note](#)
- II. [Past President's Address](#)
- III. [President's Address](#)
- IV. [Important Items](#)
- V. [Committee Reports](#)
- VI. [News and Announcements](#)
- VII. [Upcoming Meetings of Interest](#)
- VIII. [Organization](#)

## Editor's Note

A year has come and gone, and it seems that I have spent most of it facing a computer screen, not my original plan for a retirement. However, things seem to be looking up, and like our President Debra Heller (see below), I have had my shots! With this in mind, I look forward to seeing you all at the Fall meeting in Portland. From their website, The Benson looks like a great site for a meeting in a classic downtown hotel with aristocratic style.

The Spring meeting was another resounding success – many thanks to the organizers, the lecturers, and you, the participants! Almost 230 people registered, which is an excellent turnout. Virtual meetings do have advantages, particularly in the ability of our members to participate without leaving their office and work schedules. I was tasked with helping our outgoing Treasurer, Linda Ernst, to assemble questions for the Jeopardy game. At this meeting, we changed the format to include all attendees willing to participate in an initial round of questions. Once this step was completed, the top scorers were separated into teams for the formal Jeopardy game. Congratulations to Sarangarajan “Ranga” Ranganathan and Amer Heider for winning the grand prize against some tough competition!

One note concerns the annual Business Meeting. It is very important for members to participate in this session, which usually follows a long day. However, in this brief meeting, we conduct business that is not possible in other fora, and we cannot hold it without a quorum. So please attend – it doesn't last very long, and it's important.

This Newsletter features an address from our outgoing President Gino Somers, our incoming President Debra Heller, and our usual committee updates. It closes with an invitation for new members to SPPRITEs, the pediatric

bone and soft tissue neoplasm consortium. If you have an interest in this topic, be sure to consider contacting one of the officers, as per the article.

**David Parham**

Newsletter Editor

## Past President's Address

### Notes from a President in Exile

Dear SPP family,

My 12 months as President of the SPP started the week before COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (March 11), essentially banning travel and causing unprecedented change in our personal and professional lives. This gave the year a sense of urgency and immediacy that none of us were expecting, but also gave us the opportunity to innovate and implement changes that modernized our Society and its activities. And all of this was achieved over virtual connections and no travel!

One of the major achievements for the SPP in 2020 was our ability to pivot quickly and change the format of our meetings. We postponed the perinatal symposium and changed the Fall 2020 meeting to an online format. A new Symposium was organized and entitled "COVID-19: A New Viral Pathogen – Pathologic Approach and Findings." Speakers were gracious and agreed to speak with quite short preparation times. There was a full scientific program, and the Lotte Strauss lecture was delivered by Dr. Jessica Davis. Drs. Jason Jarzembowski and Erin Rudzinski gave the annual COG update. There was even a social event calendar, with a Jeopardy-style gameshow pitting the three presidents and their teams against one another! The meeting was a huge success, with record registration numbers and excellent feedback.

Our Spring conference was also virtual, with strong scientific and educational content including a symposium on molecular testing for pediatric sarcomas. The Farber Landing lecture was delivered by Dr. Raj Kapur, who gave a wonderful talk entitled "The Dynamic Nature of the Enteric Nervous System". The meeting again was very successful, with almost 230 registrants and, for the first time, a lecture and discussion focused on Wellness.

The summer of 2020 was marked by the tragedy of racialized violence. We at the SPP published a statement of solidarity, reiterating our values and acknowledging the deep hurt and anger felt by many. Out of this, the SPP executives developed a new funding opportunity for researchers: the "Racial and Socioeconomic Disparities and Their Effects on the Health of Children Research Grant." The first recipient was awarded at the Spring meeting, and details can be found on the website.

The year also saw the implementation of a new website, opening our slide survey online to trainees for free, new online educational initiatives, a new case report section for trainees at the fall meeting, and the establishment of a taskforce looking at the format of future SPP meetings.

Finally, and probably the one achievement that will have the most impact over the coming years, the SPP has transitioned to a new association management company, AOE Consulting. AOE Consulting has many years of experience with managing not-for-profit medical organizations. Its strength is its educational and CME portfolios, as well as association management, meeting organization, online initiatives, and organizational growth. As we transition, I would like to thank Kellen for all the work they have done with the SPP over the last 6 years and their steadfast leadership during the pandemic.

It's been an absolute honor and privilege to lead the SPP through the pandemic and beyond, and I am humbled by the work of so many committed members. I have had the good fortune to work with an exemplary executive committee, wonderful steering committees, and brilliant committee chairs and members. I am very optimistic about the future of the SPP, and I would like to thank all of you, as members, for your continued support and work. Without you, there would be no SPP.

**Gino Somers**

Past President, SPP

## President's Address

Welcome to Spring, a new beginning! Well, almost, but certainly things are going in the right direction. In my neck of the woods, participation in vaccination is strong, and the hospitalizations are getting lower. I've had my shots!

In the meantime, the SPP has risen to the situation, and has put on, and it continues to put on amazing virtual educational offerings. The virtual fall and spring meetings and the virtual Perinatal Course were great successes, with substantial registration numbers, a testament to the hard work of all those involved. Although I have been a member of SPP for many years, it is really in my current position that I am seeing close-up the large number of people and degree of dedication brought to making this all happen. I am in awe and tremendously appreciative. I also want to thank all the Committee chairs and members for their dedication and hard work. A society is only as strong as its members.

We have hope for a live Fall meeting in Portland, and our hosts have put together an excellent educational and social program. Plans also are in the works for a live Spring 2022 meeting. As we transition to a new management company, we thank Kellen for all their hard work and support and look forward to working with AOE on future endeavors. I hope we can meet in person soon.

**Debra Heller**

President, SPP

## Important Items



### Reminders

- Save the date: Fall Meeting
  - October 5-10, 2021, Benson Hotel, Portland, Oregon
  - E-mails and announcement with additional information will be forthcoming.
- Slide Survey 2021
  - Registration will launch shortly. Watch your e-mail and the website for details!

## Committee Reports



### Fellowship Committee

- Updated Pediatric Pathology Milestones and an explanatory supplemental guide with specific examples are posted on the ACGME website and are effective July 2021.

- Survey of pediatric pathology fellowship program directors to explore the impact of COVID-19 on autopsy numbers was conducted in the Fall of 2020. 50% of the respondents reported a reduction in the numbers since the start of the pandemic, and 2/3 of the directors favored a temporary reduction in the ACGME required number of 40 autopsies for the pediatric pathology fellows. Following discussions at the fellowship committee and approval by the Executive Committee, the Letter was submitted in March 2021 to the ACGME to request temporary reduction in the number of autopsies for the pediatric pathology fellows from 40 to 30 for this academic year. The committee is planning to continue discussions with the program directors to explore alternative mechanism for autopsy teaching such as SPP-sponsored on-line modules.
- Drs. Rabah and Quintanilla rotated off the committee after the SPP Spring meeting. Dr. Heider is going to serve as Chair of the Fellowship committee.

Raja Rabah  
Past Chair, Fellowship Committee

### **Finance Committee**

SPP Finances at the close of March 2021 show a total balance of \$1,636,212, which includes a year-to-date gain of \$98,771. Total revenue YTD \$247,681 is \$13,466 less than last year, and total expenses, \$188,540, is \$14,425 less than last year. The Spring Meeting expenses, \$8,829 and revenue, \$57,300, resulted in a \$48,471 net revenue. Annual budgets are to be revised this summer following our management company transition and considering forthcoming decisions to be made regarding future meeting format/virtual platform needs. Transition of banking account and financial statement management from Kellen to AOE will occur in May, to maximize continuity.

Jennifer Black  
Chair, Finance Committee

### **Membership Committee**

The membership committee thanks all those who took the time to complete the SPP membership survey. The information provided is extremely valuable to understanding the makeup of SPP members, as well as in helping to identify future initiatives to best serve member needs. The committee has analyzed the survey data over the summer and fall, and we look forward to using this information to develop new initiatives in 2021 that will boost recruitment and retention in SPP, as well as recognize our current and incoming members. We are always looking for ideas for improvement, so please feel free to share your thoughts with me or any of the membership committee members.

Erin Rudzinski  
Chair, Membership Committee

### **Perinatal Committee**

- Fall 2021 Perinatal Symposium will occur in Oregon and Dr Terry Morgan is the Director of the Symposium: New insights into the early detection and long-term health consequences of pregnancy complications.
- The Perinatal Committee will send out an email soon with a call for submission for the Perinatal Slide Session at the fall meeting.

Eumenia Castro  
Chair, Perinatal Committee

### **Practice Committee**

- As of the Spring Meeting, the Practice Committee welcomed a new member, Alanna Church, MD, to the committee.
- Dr. Drucilla Roberts in collaboration with members of the perinatal committee, led a group of pediatric pathologists, pathology assistants and technicians to update guidelines for placental triage. A manuscript including such guidelines has been drafted and reviewed by the placental subcommittee. AAP neonatology branch, fully endorsed it, ACOG and SMFM are still reviewing it.
- Dr. Mika Warren developed a practice survey regarding the use of electron microscopy. The committee has reviewed this survey and will be circulating to SPP membership over the next few months.
- The Pediatric Brain Tumor Testing Task Force (AMP, SPP, neuropathology) initiative to draft pediatric brain tumors molecular testing guidelines will commence in the coming months. This collaborative effort involving the SPP's Education and Practice committees will develop guidelines regarding tissue utilization and the scope of molecular testing for pediatric brain tumors.
- Dr. Robyn Reed developed a survey regarding the current practice for handling and reporting appendectomy specimens. This survey is currently being reviewed by the committee.

Dolores Lopez-Terrada, M.D., Ph.D.  
Chair, Practice Committee

### **Publications Committee**

The PubCom meeting at the virtual SPP Spring 2021 Meeting was well attended by an enthusiastic crowd composed of Amy HM, Anita S, Geling L, Kerby O, Bruce P, Sarangaraian R, Naseem U, Abdul S, Raja R, Eric C, Pierre R (PDP EIC, member *ex-officio*), Deb H (incoming President), Jim W (BOD liaison), Alyssa V (Publishing Editor at SAGE), Lauren H (Associated Publisher at SAGE), Linda E (member *ex-officio*), Chandra K, Soyini J, Miguel RM, Fusun G, Jonathan B, Raj K, and Vandy P. The PubCom attendees are herein listed by their first names, as use of their last names would belie the informality and familiarity of this committee (and SPP in general).

At the meeting, the following items were addressed:

- The PubCom membership was updated and a warm welcome was extended to the new members, and the members rolling off of the committee were thanked for their time and dedication to the committee and the SPP.
- The SPP Association Management transition was discussed, indicating that the new SPP Association Management would be AOE Consulting, by June 2021.
- The 2019 Publishers Report was (prepared and) presented by Alyssa Venezia, Publishing Editor at SAGE, and included the following highlights:
  - o There were 209 article submissions to the PDP, the submissions were increased by 15%; however, acceptance decreased by 30%, likely in part due to the pandemic.
    - The time to first decision was 28 days with a final decision in 62 days.

- The 2020 impact factor (IF, as always based on previous two years) is 0.885 (2019 IF: 0.885; 2018 IF: 1.008; 2017 IF: 1.250). The IF calculations will be changed, focusing on electronic publication dates for articles, and this will likely incur a significant fluctuation of the IF over the next few years.
- SAGE's Covid-19 response was identified as prioritization of Covid-19 papers, publishing all original research articles as open access at no cost, with all others published for free access, and a microsite for Covid-19 was created.
- The SPP/SAGE contract renewal was discussed during the meeting, walking through the proposal letter from SAGE and discussing potential impacts to the SPP. The Committee voted to accept an online-only subscription moving forward in 2022, which was presented to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors for consideration.
- The PubCom's budget was discussed, as well as the role of the Publications Committee in relation to assistance to the *Editor-in-Chief*.
- The committee will assess the potential of publications-associated CME activities in upcoming meetings, and in collaboration with the SPP Education Committee.

Have a great summer!

Monique De Paepe

Chair, Publication Committee

#### **Informatics & Communication Committee**

- Committee members helped select and implement the software platforms for the virtual fall and spring SPP meetings, and will continue to assist with any future virtual or hybrid meetings.
- The SPP website and online functions will be switched to a new host and format as part of the management company transition.
- AOE is working to compile and upload archival documents. Dr. Sonja Chen, Archives Director, will be heading up this project along with several I&C members.
- We continue to maintain an active social media presence on Twitter ([@SocPediPath](https://twitter.com/SocPediPath)) and through the pediatric pathology forum. Dr. Michael Arnold, Social Media Director, is leading this work.
- The I&C Committee welcomed two new members, Drs. Kate Dannheim and Charlotte Kim.

Jason Jarzembowski

Chair, Informatics & Communication Committee

## **News and Announcements**



### **CALL FOR NEW MEMBERS**

#### **Sarcoma Pediatric Pathology Research INTErest group (SPPRITEs)**

SPPRITEs is organized for the purpose of supporting pediatric pathologists in the field of bone and soft tissue neoplasia research, through professional development, education, shared research, and clinical advancement. Membership is open to pediatric pathologists with an interest in these topics. Meetings are held via electronic formats monthly and in person annually. If you have an interest in joining this group, please contact Erin Rudzinski ([Erin.Rudzinski@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:Erin.Rudzinski@seattlechildrens.org)), Jennifer Black ([Jennifer.black2@childrenscolorado.org](mailto:Jennifer.black2@childrenscolorado.org)), and Jessica Davis ([davisjes@ohsu.edu](mailto:davisjes@ohsu.edu)).

## Upcoming Meetings of Interest

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Meeting Dates and Location</i>
Association for Molecular Pathology Europe 2021 Virtual Congress	June 14-18, 2021 – <i>virtual</i>
University of Chicago 38 <sup>th</sup> Conference on Pediatric Disease Update on Pediatric Pathology	August 2021 – <i>Exact dates and location TBD</i>
USCAP Annual Meeting	March 19-24, 2022 – <i>Los Angeles, CA</i>

## SPP Organization

### **Society for Pediatric Pathology**

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### Board of Directors

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### Official Journal

*Pediatric and Developmental Pathology*  
Editor: Pierre Russo, MD

### Officers

President: Debra Heller, MD  
President-Elect: Laura Finn, MD  
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### Committee Chairs

Education Committee: Sanda Alexandrescu, MD  
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