

## Martinis & Musings: Notes from WAR

By Paul Davis, MD, FRCPC

The sun shone brightly and, while sipping martinis on the patio of the Manteo Resort hotel, it was difficult to remember that one was attending a serious clinical meeting. A fundamental premise of the Western Alliance of Rheumatology (WAR) meeting is that it could and should be fun. The opportunity to blend good medicine with social interaction with family and colleagues has been a major reason for its continued success.

The scientific component of the meeting is dictated by the participants themselves who are all invited to give a 15-minute clinical presentation. No visiting firemen, trials, or rats and enzymes at this meeting! Participants take pride in presenting challenging cases to their colleagues and presentations are all of high calibre, ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. One notable feature has always been the involvement of trainees during the scientific program; their presentations are of the highest quality and their sartorial elegance unmatched by all, save for Dr. John Esdaile. This meeting is often the first chance these trainees have to give presentations to an audience outside their own educational centre. It is gratifying to see that rheumatology in Canada is in good hands for the future.

A continued extra value for trainees has been the mock rheumatology objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) supported by an industry grant. Here, trainees can ply their clinical skills against the best rheumatologic minds of western Canada and obtain confidential feedback on their performance. This has been, and we hope will continue to be, a key component of the weekend's events.

And now back to my martini! Real estate agents will tell you it's about location, location, location and the Okanagan valley offers much for attendees, not least of which include the local wineries. We continue to encourage attendees to participate in the social events of the weekend, such as wine and cheese gatherings and a BBQ supper. Somebody once said—or maybe I just invented it—that "a relaxed mind is a fertile mind".

Finally I would be remiss not to mention that this meeting would not be possible without our industry

colleagues. We encourage their active participation in all activities and hope that they also obtain valuable benefit for their own continuing professional development (CPD) needs.

See you all in 2016.

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