By Mayssa Toppino, M.D.
FSO President

It is an honor to be elected your new FSO president. The Florida Society of Ophthalmology is an organization that we can all celebrate.

The FSO has set national standards in a wide variety of areas to protect patients and promote high quality education and training for ophthalmologists.

2007 will be the 40th anniversary of the founding of the FSO and it’s a good time to reflect on our profession, look at our accomplishments and look forward to the future.

Florida has always been nationally recognized for its leadership beginning in 1967 when the FSO was first organized. Early on, Florida was recognized as a center for excellence in eye care. Its first chairman was an active participant in the FSO.

The Florida Society of Ophthalmology has always promoted the highest standards of ethical care—standards recognized throughout the medical profession.

From the ranks of FSO, we have had several presidents of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the largest medical specialty group in the world. Among those are Dr. Mike Redmond of Pensacola, a pediatric ophthalmologist and Dr. Mel Rubin of Gainesville—who is each year honored with the FSO’s Mel Rubin lecture presented by a world class ophthalmologist who has worked with Dr. Rubin.

As your FSO president, I will work hard to build continued on page 3

Pediatric Screening CD Being Distributed To Florida Physicians

The Vision Is Priceless Council and Nemours have collaborated on the creation of an interactive CD, Pediatric Vision Screening, which teaches practical techniques for screening children ages birth to five years. This CD is being distributed at no charge to all pediatricians and family physicians in the state of Florida.

Children’s eye conditions may result in blindness, or in the case of retinoblastoma, even death. However, with early detection, many children’s eye conditions may be successfully treated. Retinoblastoma, congenital cataracts, amblyopia and strabismus are detectable and treatable. Yet, See Screening on page 6

Plan now for the FSO 2007 Annual Meeting June 22-24 2007

Book your hotel NOW at the NEW Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel Orlando, Florida Ask for the FSO room rate of $179.00/night. See Page 4!
By Steve Hull
FSO Lobbyist and Public Relations

The decisive win by Republican Charlie Crist is a positive omen for the Republican party of Florida and the profession of medicine since Governor-elect Crist is the son of a still practicing physician and has always had a positive record of supporting medical issues.

Through the hard work of our Legislative Committee chair Dr. Alan Mendelsohn, the FSO was the first medical group in the state to support the Crist candidacy. We worked hard to get all of medicine behind Crist in the primary against his opponent, Chief Financial Officer Tom Gallagher.

What does it mean to have someone in the governor’s office who understands the complicated world of medicine?

First, it means Charlie Crist will make providing the best professional health care possible to the people of Florida a top priority. That means making sure that health care providers meet the highest standard of care assuring patients have the best and most well prepared doctors possible.

It means that the governor’s office will understand the difference between a physician and other health care providers that have no training as medical doctors, no internship or no residency experience.

Governor Crist will know the difference between the care given by an optometrist and ophthalmologist and spread that word far and wide: Ophthalmologists are medically trained and provide the best eye care possible, including surgery requiring tens of thousands of patient contacts.

Ophthalmology, is in a constant battle across the nation with optometrists trying to get surgical and systemic drug privileges without having medical training.

For physicians in the state, Mr. Crist’s appointments to the variety of boards that oversee patient care, especially the Board of Medicine, will be sensitive and I believe we can depend on governor elect Crist to provide the best trained personnel for the important positions of Secretary of the Department of Health and the Agency for Health Care Administration.

And not only is medicine and ophthalmology in excellent position with the governor’s office, the new senate president Republican Ken Pruitt has been a long time friend of ophthalmology and our profession. We can also depend on new speaker Marco Rubio to understand the great contributions that medical doctors and especially ophthalmologists have provided the citizens of Florida.

Florida bucked the national trend of Democratic leaders taking over the powerful positions of government.

It is important that all physicians—especially eye MDs—continue to demand that their elected official place quality health care as priority number one.

When that happens we all benefit.

~ New Legislators ~

2006 Freshman Senators
Ted Deutch (D) Delray Beach
Don Gaetz (R) Destin
Arthenia Joyner (D) Tampa
Charlie Justice (D) St. Petersburg
Steve Oelrich (R) Gainesville
Jeremy Ring (D) Tamarac
Ronda Stortm (R) Brandon

2006 Freshman Representatives
Gary Aubuchon (R) Cape Coral
Debbie Boyd (D) Newberry
Ronald Brise (D) Miami
Charles Chestnut (D) Gainesville
Keith Fitzgerald (D) Sarasota
James Frishe (R) St. Petersburg
Luis Garcia (D) Hialeah
Joe Gibbons (D) Hallandale Beach
Eddy Gonzalez (R) Hialeah
Bill Heller (D) St. Petersburg
Doug Holder (R) Sarasota
Eddy Hooper (R) Clearwater
Evan Jenne (D) Dania Beach
Martin Kiar (D) Davie
Rick Kriseman (R) St. Petersburg
Janet Long (D) Seminole
Seth McKeel (R) Lakeland
Peter Nehr (R) Tarpon Springs
Bryan Nelson (R) Apopka
Jimmy T. Patronis (R) Panama City
Steve Precourt (R) Orlando
Scott Randolph (D) Orlando
Betty Reed (D) Tampa
Garrett Richter (R) Naples
Maria Sachs (D) Delray Beach
Ron Saunders (D) Key West
Robert Schenck (R) Spring Hill
Elaine Schwartz (D) Hollywood
Michael Scionti (D) Tampa
Kelly Skidmore (D) Boca Raton
William Snyder (R) Stuart
Geraldine Thompson (D) Stuart
Nick Thompson (R) Fort Myers
Perry Thurston (D) Ft. Lauderdale
Jim Waldman (D) Coconut Creek
Will Weatherford (R) Zephyrhills

~ New Legislators ~
Coverage for Specialist on Emergency Room Call

A growing concern of many physicians and hospitals, especially in South Florida, is the exposure many specialist face while handling Emergency Room call. Many high-risk specialists are refusing to treat patients in the Emergency Room.

Physicians are generally unaware that ER call exposure is included in the rates at FPIC and likely with other carriers as well. When rates are developed, there is consideration for the typical emergency room call exposure to risk. Since it is impossible to truly measure actuarially how much of the rate by percentage is a reflection of ER claims pressure, it is impossible for a carrier to offer discounting off of the rates if a doc refuses to do ER. Traditionally, all physicians will have to offer some ER call, particularly if they intend to maintain admitting privileges.

One way hospitals are dealing with the lack of specialist in the ER is to form a captive insurance company. The captive is being formed to initially only cover the exposure in the emergency room, but ultimately the captive will also cover the primary professional liability exposure, therefore eliminating the need for traditional insurers. The captive will be created as a single cell arrangement for each hospital involved. To the hospitals this is an attractive option because, they are all ready paying exorbitant premiums for liability coverage for their trauma physicians and will not be effected by the exposure of other hospitals or physicians.

WILL YOUR INSURANCE CARRIER STAND THE TEST OF TIME...

...OR WILL IT BE GONE IN AN INSTANT?

Many non-traditional insurance entities are now offering professional liability insurance in Florida. Some of these companies could be gone in an instant. FPIC has stood the test of time. Since 1973, we have been protecting physicians’ reputations and personal assets. You should be insured with a carrier you can count on when you need them the most.

FPIC is endorsed by the Florida Medical Association and the Florida Dental Association

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1000 Riverside Avenue, Suite 800 • Jacksonville, FL 32204 • www.medmal.com
The Florida Society of Ophthalmology held its 2006 annual meeting from August 18-20, at the beautiful Ritz Carlton beach resort in Naples. The excellent attendance (145 physicians, 165 technicians, 30 office managers) continued a string of successful FSO meetings.

Friday morning’s program began with the ever-popular AAO CodeQuest program. This was followed by the afternoon’s glaucoma mini-symposium on “Optic nerve Imaging” featuring Dr. Robert Dania and Florida’s Drs. Rick Bendel, Michael Levine and Paul Schacknow. Friday evening was capped off by a well-attended cocktail and heavy hors d’oeuvres reception with the exhibitors.

The Saturday Scientific Session featured lectures by Abhdish Bavsar (retina), R. Doyle Stulting (refractive surgery), Robert Osher (cataract) and Robert Dania (glaucoma). The Melvin Rubin Lecture entitled “Progress and Challenges: the Treatment of Dry Eyes” was delivered by Michael Lemp.

Unfortunately, the Saturday afternoon golf and tennis tournaments were abbreviated due to heavy thunderstorms.

The Saturday evening President’s Dinner/Dance was well attended and an excellent time had by all. Current President Gary Dolan of Bradenton passed the gavel to Mayssa Toppino who assumed leadership of the society at the meeting’s conclusion.

Sunday morning began with the OMIC risk management meeting. Attendees were treated to excellent practice advice in addition to a discount on their OMIC premium.

The annual business meeting highlighted the society’s excellent fiscal condition. The Board recommended a new slate of officers, David Cano (West Palm Beach) – President Elect, Saiyid Hasan (Jacksonville) – Vice President, and Joe Trentacoste (Miami) – Secretary/Treasurer, which was unanimously approved by the membership.

The meeting concluded with the ever-popular sub-specialty sessions (retina, oculoplastics, pediatrics, glaucoma, refractive).

In an attempt to avoid inclement weather, the date of next year’s meeting will be moved forward to June 22-24 and the meeting will be held at the newly opened Rosen Shingle Creek resort in Orlando. For more information, read the story below.

For all of you who are planning your 2007 calendars, don’t forget to write down June 22-24, 2007. That’s the date for FSO’s 2007 Annual Meeting. It will be held at a brand new hotel in Orlando that has many exciting amenities for you and your family.

This is background provided us on the hotel:

“Situated on 230 acres of lush landscape, Rosen Shingle Creek is Central Florida’s newest and most luxurious meeting destination. The history of Shingle Creek reveals the captivating tale of how its majestic cypress trees provided some much needed shelter for early settlers and their homes. Today, our stunning grand lobby welcomes you into a world of lavish choices, complete with luxury accommodations, enticing restaurants, and a championship golf course. Rosen Shingle Creek is conveniently located on Universal Boulevard just off the Beachline Expressway (SSR 528 Exit #2) and a half mile east of the Orange County Convention Center. This ideal location is also minutes away from Orlando’s world famous attractions like Disney World®, Universal Orlando®, Wet’n Wild and Sea World®”

You can get special FSO room rates for only $179 a night. This year’s annual meeting will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the FSO and will include many highly respected ophthalmologists from throughout the country.
The FSO Honor Roll

Shaler Richardson, M.D.
Service to Medicine Award

Miami Ophthalmologist Dr. Philip Rosenfield, M.D., was awarded a top honor from The Florida Society of Ophthalmology, the Shaler Richardson, M.D. Service to Medicine award. He was presented the award at the Florida Society of Ophthalmology’s annual meeting in Naples held August 18-20, 2006.

Dr. Rosenfield received a Bachelor of Arts degree summa cum laude from Case Western Reserve University, and his medical degree from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He completed a residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at The Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore and a residency in Ophthalmology at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Harvard University. He then completed a fellowship at Harvard in Ophthalmology (Retinal Degenerations), and a fellowship at University Miami School of Medicine, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Vitreoretinal Diseases, where he currently practices.

James W. Clower, Jr. M.D.,
Community Service Award

The Florida Society of Ophthalmology awarded the James W. Clower, Jr. M.D. Community Service Award to Mark Dorfman, M.D. of Hollywood at their annual meeting in Naples August 18-20, 2006. The award is given annually to the Florida ophthalmologist who has made the greatest contribution of time and service to his/her community.

Dr. Dorfman currently practices at Eye Surgery Associates of Florida, specializing in pediatric ophthalmology. He earned his medical degree at Albany Medical College in New York and completed his Residency at the Medical College of Virginia in the Department of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Dorfman has led the way in fighting for screening the young for eye disease. He is a former FSO president who studied biology as an undergraduate at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York.

He continued on to medical school at Albany Medical College and completed his Fellowship in Pediatric Ophthalmology at Children’s Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

We are very happy to introduce this year’s winner, of the the Clower Community Service Award to Dr. Mark Dorfman of Hollywood, Florida.

President of the Florida Society of Ophthalmology

Dr. Mayssa Aziz Toppino, M.D., FACS, the Medical Director at Eye Specialists, has been nominated as president of the Florida Society of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Toppino specializes in small incision cataract surgery and glaucoma, as well as Botox treatments. She graduated summa cum laude from Case Western Reserve University in Ohio. She received her medical degree from Ohio State University of Medicine. She completed her internship and residency in ophthalmology at The George Washington University in Washington D.C.

Distinguished Service as Top Ophthalmologist Award

The Florida Society of Ophthalmology awarded the John R. Brayton award for Distinguished Board Service to Ophthalmologist Michael Stewart, M.D.

Dr. Stewart serves as both Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and as Chief of Ophthalmology at St. Luke’s Hospital at the Mayo Clinic. He previously served as president of the Board of the Florida Society of Ophthalmology. Dr. Stewart received his Undergraduate Degree in Chemistry from Harvard University. He graduated from McGill Medical School in Montreal with his M.D. He completed residencies at University of Miami and at Emory University. Dr. Stewart also completed fellowships in Vitreoretinal Diseases at the Retina Research Foundation and at the University of California.

Outstanding Young Ophthalmologist Leadership Award

The Florida Society of Ophthalmology has named Stephen Schwartz, M.D., of Jacksonville as the Outstanding Young Ophthalmologist in Florida. Dr. Schwartz practices at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Naples.

Schwartz’s honor is given annually to a Florida ophthalmologist younger than forty years of age, who has been in his/her practice situation for less than eight years, who has demonstrated leadership, service, competence, and devotion to the high ethical and professional standards of the Florida Society of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Schwartz is a graduate of Cornell University. He completed his Residency in Ophthalmology at New York University School of Medicine and his Fellowship in Diseases and surgery of the retina and vitreous at McPherson Retina Center, Baylor College of Medicine.

Two FSO Members Receive Secretariat Award from AAO

FSO members Stephen Schwartz M.D., of Naples and L. Neal Freeman M.D., MBA, of Melbourne, have received the Secretariat Award from the American Academy of Ophthalmology. The award recognizes special contributions made to the Academy and to ophthalmology.
Florida’s children continue to be identified with eye conditions past the optimum age for treatment.

Florida’s primary care physicians are best situated to screen and identify those children ages birth to five years in need of a complete eye examination. Effective education regarding the importance of early vision screening, proper methods and timing of screenings will enhance the way infants and preschool children are screened at their doctors’ offices.

Vision Is Priceless Council staff and volunteers have partnered with Nemours Children’s Clinic, Mayo Clinic-Jacksonville, and the Florida Society of Ophthalmology (FSO) to produce an interactive training CD-ROM that will change the way infants and preschool children are screened at their doctors’ offices. The project will educate pediatricians and family practitioners, as well as appropriate clinical staff, on the importance of early vision screening and teach methods and timings of screenings. Featured screenings include red reflex, external inspection, fixation behavior, corneal light reflex, Bruckner test, cover test and eye charts.

This educational tool has been authored by Robert W. Hered, M.D., Chief-Pediatric Ophthalmology at Nemours Children’s Clinic in Jacksonville and Medical Director of VIP’s Children’s Program. The CD offers opportunities to earn Continuing Medical Education credits and provide program feedback.

FSO member Dr. Robert W. Hered, M.D., Chief-Pediatric Ophthalmology at Nemours Children’s Clinic in Jacksonville and Medical Director of VIP’s Children’s Program, announce educational DVD. Also attending Jacksonville Mayor John Peyton.

The Florida CD is endorsed by the Florida Society of Ophthalmology, the Florida Pediatric Society, and the Florida Academy of Family Physicians. Other supporting organizations include Mayo Clinic, Medtronic Foundation, the American Retina Foundation and PedsEducation.org.
Mendelsohn tapped for Crist Transition Team

Governor-Elect Charlie Crist has selected Hollywood physician Dr. Alan Mendelsohn to serve in a key leadership role on his transition team overseeing health care in Florida.

Alan D. Mendelsohn, M.D., has been an ophthalmologist in Broward County for twenty years. He attended Northwestern University’s Honors Program in Medical Education and Northwestern University Medical School, where he also completed his residency training in Ophthalmology. At the completion of this training, he was honored by the prestigious Heed Ophthalmic Foundation as one of the ten most outstanding graduating ophthalmologists in the United States.

Dr. Mendelsohn and his family moved to South Florida in 1986, where he completed a Fellowship in corneal transplant surgery and corneal refractive surgery at the renowned Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.

While practicing in South Florida, Dr. Mendelsohn has been actively engaged in organized medicine at the local, state, and national levels. He served as president of the Florida Society of Ophthalmology in 1996 and continues to lead that organization’s public policy efforts. Dr. Mendelsohn has also held numerous leadership positions in both the Broward County Medical Association and the Florida Medical Association.

He has received a number of national awards for his efforts and for his leadership from such organizations as the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the Florida Medical Association, and the Florida Society of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Mendelsohn has written articles for numerous scientific publications and has presented his findings at international and national ophthalmology society conferences.

Dr. Alan D. Mendelsohn, M.D. is practicing at Eye Surgeons & Consultants on Sheridan Street in Hollywood, Florida.

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BOARD CERTIFIED OPHTHALMOLOGIST with FL, GA, SC lics. Seeks affiliation with ophthalmologic colleagues to do medical retina, uveitis, and general ophthalmology in your offices. Reply to: kllmd1119@hotmail.com
Here’s what your new FSO website looks like

In the early part of January 2007 FSO will unveil a brand new website with an increased emphasis on patients receiving the latest information on ophthalmological issues including how to reach an FSO eye MD when they are in need of service. The multi media website will be attractive and easy to navigate and will have a special section for only FSO members so you can get the latest educational and legislative information impacting your every day practice. The FSO website, MDeye.org, was initiated by the Board and implemented by our lobbyist and public relations director Steve Hull in 2001 with the excellent assistance of web master Clark Morgan. The site has been a popular reference and information reservoir for the latest information on all aspects of your Society receiving up to 14,000 hits per month. The web site will be for your use as a member and we hope it will enable you to communicate on a broader scope with your patients and the public at large in Florida. So don’t forget, go to MDeye.org after the new year and see your newly designed website.