

## William P. Dillon, MD 39th President of the ASNR

On April 25, 2001, William Dillon became the 39th president of the ASNR. With that, our society's helm came to rest in the hands of a leader who has ably served the ASNR in many capacities in the past, has maintained an impressive academic career, and has a clear view of the future for the ASNR.

Bill, the oldest of four siblings and a native Californian, was born in San Mateo in 1952 to William and Mary Dillon. William Sr, who was one of eight children, and Mary had three children besides Bill: Terry, Jim, and Carol. Raised in Santa Clara, Calif, Bill graduated from Moreau High School and entered the University of Santa Clara (USC), Calif, in 1970 as a mathematics major. Like many who did not begin their higher education with medicine in mind, Bill was deeply influenced early in his college career by two professors: Dr. Thomas Fast, who encouraged him to become involved in neuroanatomy, and Professor William Mehler, in whose laboratory Bill worked while he was at USC.

In that laboratory, Bill assisted Professor Mehler in his histologic projects on the vestibular and pain pathways, performing experimental operations in rats and cats and preparing histologic slides for Dr Mehler's review. In this job, Bill was first exposed to neuroanatomy; this experience helped him begin a career in the neurosciences. Professor Mehler clearly had a major influence on Bill's life, and all of us in the ASNR have indirectly benefited from his early college work experience.

Midway through college, Bill switched his major to biology and graduated cum laude in 1974. He entered the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Medicine and, in his senior year, decided to pursue a career in either internal medicine or neurology. During his internship at Virginia Mason Hospital in Seattle, Wash, Bill became increasingly interested in radiology, but the residency match in radiology for the upcoming year had already occurred.

Fortunately, Bill maintained contact with his long-time friend and medical school colleague, Ric Harnsberger, who was a resident at the University of Utah. From Ric, Bill learned of a residency opening in Salt Lake City, Utah. Bill quickly seized that opportunity and entered the 3-year diagnostic radiology program in 1979. While in Salt Lake City, Bill was mentored by the four neuroradiology attending physicians on staff: Drs Anne Osborn, Douglas Wing, Robert Anderson, and Tony Mancuso. Dr Mancuso ignited Bill's interest in head and neck radiology, and our society is well aware of the important contributions that Bill has made in that field. During his last 6 months of residency, Bill trained exclusively in neuroradiology. He applied to a formal neuroradiology fellowship at the

University of California at San Francisco and was accepted.

At the completion of his fellowship, MR imaging was emerging on the clinical scene, and UCSF had obtained an early 0.35-T Diasonics unit. This opportunity was too good to miss, so Bill joined the faculty at UCSF and was assigned primarily to the San Francisco Veteran's Affairs (SFVA) Hospital, Calif, where he stayed for 3 years. His nascent interest in head and neck radiology coincided nicely with the increasing use of MR imaging and resulted in Bill's first presentation at a national meeting, namely, the 1983 American Society of Head and Neck Radiology (ASHNR) meeting in Boston. This work was later published in *Radiology* in 1984 (1).

Bill left the SFVA in 1986 to join the formidable neuroradiology section at UCSF. In 1991, he became chief of neuroradiology. In 1993, he was promoted to professor of radiology, neurology and neurosurgery; and in 1998, he was appointed to the additional position of Vice Chairman for Radiology Research. In that capacity, he continues to help build the department's research infrastructure.

Bill has a long history of service to the ASNR, including serving as president of the ASHNR, treasurer of the ASNR, member of numerous committees within the ASNR, and senior editor of the *American Journal of Neuroradiology*. A well-published academic radiologist with more than 150 articles in peer-reviewed journals and 20 book chapters or books to his credit, Bill reviews manuscripts for numerous radiology and neuroscience journals and participates in many grant-supported research projects. In addition to all of his scholarly accomplishments, our Society has recognized Bill as an articulate, innovative, thoughtful, and clear-thinking leader.

Radiology is a strong presence in the Dillon household; Irene Balcar, Bill's wife, also is a radiologist in the Bay area. She completed her undergraduate and medical school education at Stanford University, Calif, and completed her residency at UCSF. Also, she was a fellow in body imaging at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston, Mass. Bill and Irene met shortly after her return to the Bay area, when she was a junior faculty member at Stanford. Irene now is a staff radiologist at Kaiser Permanente in Oakland, Calif. Bill and Irene and their three children, Alex (aged 14 y), Andrea (aged 12 y), and Annelise (aged 8 y), live in San Francisco proper, within a short walking distance from UCSF. The Dillon children are an active and studious crew, mingling tennis, soccer, volleyball, and acting with their schoolwork. Both Bill and Irene are deeply involved in their children's activities, and fortunately, the family occasionally can

travel together. Despite his hectic schedule, Bill clearly recognizes his family as the highest priority in his life.

In Bill's eyes, the future of radiology in general radiology, and neuroradiology in particular, lies in being at the forefront of imaging research. Success in this arena will depend, in part, on the ability of our specialty to flourish in an environment in which demands are increasing but the number of radiologists is not. With the burgeoning number of studies and their increasing complexity, less time is available for research. This bodes ill for our specialty. Bill believes that we must make progress on all fronts to increase research within our academic training programs. He further believes that the members of the ASNR must recognize this need and support the expansion of fellowship programs to more than 1 clinical year of neuroradiology. Bill has specific ideas about these efforts and will pre-

sent them to the Society over the course of his presidency.

With this proactive attitude, the Society will move forward under Bill's leadership, and, with the force of his personality, he will be able to effect change. Bill defies Leo Durocher's old adage, and we in the ASNR can justly say, "Nice guys finish first."

ROBERT M. QUENCER, MD  
*Editor-in-Chief*

### Reference

1. Dillon WP, Mills CM, Kjos B, DeGroot J, Brant-Zawadzki M. **Magnetic resonance imaging of the nasopharynx.** *Radiology* 1984;152:731-738.