

Letter from the President

We announce with great sorrow the passing this fall of J. Christian Gillin, charter member and former president of the Society for Light Treatment and Biological Rhythms (SLTBR). We thank Sonia Ancoli-Israel for contributing a poignant obituary (p. 1135) in time for publication with our 2003 proceedings in this issue of *Chronobiology International*.

The Board of Directors has dedicated our Young Investigator Award in Chris' memory. We congratulate Kelly J. Rohan, recipient of the 2003 J. Christian Gillin Young Investigator Award. Hear Kelly speak at our 16th annual meeting in Toronto on May 28–30, 2004. We thank Apollo Lighting Systems for sponsoring the award.

The Sleep Research Society is also establishing a Junior Faculty Award in Chris' memory. Colleagues are invited to make donations toward the "SRS Gillin Jr. Faculty Award," which should be sent to Judy Milton, Sleep Research Society, One Westbrook Corporate Center, Westchester, IL 60154.

This issue of *Chronobiology International* presents 40 peer-reviewed abstracts in short-report format, comprising the raw material for a novel Virtual Meeting of SLTBR. The unfortunate spread of Sudden Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) to Toronto last spring forced the cancellation of SLTBR's fifteenth annual meeting, which was to be its second after adoption of *Chronobiology International* as its official journal in 2002. In collaboration with the Journal, the Society devised this Virtual Meeting to include abstract presentation, review and discussion.

Abstract length is double the Journal's standard format, allowing greater detail of presentation including graphics and tables, rather than as a précis of oral reports and posters. They received an intensive peer review in which 82% were accepted pending revision (all abstracts were revised at least once) and 73% were finally included. For this preparatory phase, the Society thanks the review committee for its effort: Michael Terman (chair), Josephine Arendt, Namni Goel, Raymond W. Lam, Alfred J. Lewy, Dan A. Oren and Anna Wirz-Justice. Michael Terman and Namni Goel provided heroic direction of the preparation of revisions and editorial guidance. The Society also thanks Kathleen Matikonis, Executive Director, for coordinating the project; Michael H. Smolensky, Co-Editor of the Journal, for inviting this presentation; and Tara Kincaid of Marcel Dekker, Inc., for supervising rapid publication.

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To make a true meeting there needs to be scholarly interaction above-and-beyond peer review. For Virtual Meeting 2003, here is how it works:

1. Robert Levitan and Anthony J. Levitt preface the abstracts with an integrative overview (this issue, pp. 1139–1148). They identify trends in the field's development and highlight new findings and puzzles.
2. Abstracts are posted in a members-only area on SLTBR's homepage, <http://www.sltbr.org>. A dedicated Internet discussion group has been established, *sltbr-vm2003*, with a homepage at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sltbr-vm2003/>. Any SLTBR member can post comments on the abstracts to the following email address: sltbr-vm2003@yahoogroups.com. An edited digest of the comments will be sent weekly to the *sltbr-l* listserv, where the digests are permanently archived. The discussion will continue until next year's annual meeting.

All SLTBR members are encouraged to join the Virtual Meeting discussion. Detailed instructions for participating in the online discussion will be sent to all members of the *sltbr-l* listserv. If you are not yet a member but would like to join the discussion, please see www.sltbr.org for our membership application (regular, associate, student, and corporate). Your 2004 membership will be activated immediately.

Anthony J. Levitt, M.D.
President, Society for Light Treatment
and Biological Rhythms

