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**President's Report**  
Submitted by Ray F. Anton, MD  
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It was an absolute privilege to serve as RSA President (first as Acting and then in an Official Status) from April 2007 through June 2008, and I enjoyed the support of a competent and committed Executive Committee. The Society is healthy and vibrant. Members are engaged and participatory in many areas. Committee chairs have been communicative and performing exceptionally well. The membership is growing and becoming more youthful – a crucial sign of the Society's vitality and future success.

Most importantly, from my perspective, the field of alcoholism research is quietly, but effectively, being recognized as legitimate, innovative, and important for the overall well-being of our Society. Despite shrinking federal budgetary support in real dollar terms, scientists continue to do good work, advances are steady, and our journal continues to have a large impact on the field. It is also clear that the diversity of research is becoming more interactive and complex – all to the good.

This past year a number of initiatives and issues have come and gone, while others will continue into the future. The following are some highlights:

- Of course, the main priority of the Society is the annual meeting. The conjoint meeting this year made the planning especially challenging. We appointed three program co-chairs, two from RSA (Rajita Sinha, Peter Miller) and one from ISBRA (Adron Harris- appointed by ISBRA President Toshi Saito). Plenary speakers were picked well in advance (two from RSA and one from ISBRA) and the Program Committee (made up of RSA and ISBRA members) functioned perfectly. Along with assistance from Debby Sharp, they have orchestrated a fair, well-balanced, and scientifically excellent program. Due to the higher than normal number of submissions, evening symposia needed to be added and paper sessions curtailed. Additionally, Ed Riley once again did an outstanding job in constructing and submitting a conference grant to NIAAA to assist in the travel support of non-US presenters, especially those from Asian countries.
- There has been a transition plan in place for the selection, organization and on-site management of our annual meeting starting in 2010 in San Antonio. Debby Sharp, with assistance from current and new personnel, will assume the role of total meeting management. She has also, with the counsel of Anna Taylor and my assistance, chosen the sites for the 2011 and 2012 annual meetings. In 2011 it will be held in Atlanta and in 2012 in San Francisco. Contracts have been signed at competitive rates.

- Early in the year I had personal phone consultations with each of the current committee chairs to review goals, objectives, and needs for the year. This was an invaluable experience for me and, hopefully, for them. This led to some operational changes and thoughts about new committee members as well as detailed plans for the future. Many have ongoing projects that will carry over until next year.
- Given the initiative within NIH to revamp the grant review process, I asked Mark Goldman to form an ad hoc committee to not only be a watchdog of this process, but also to report new developments to the RSA membership. He also volunteered to speak with NIAAA representatives about initiatives within NIAAA and about how the NIH directives might be implemented, or impact, NIAAA as well as RSA members. He will present some of these issues to the Board and will continue as necessary in this role into next year.
- Considerable time was spent in the past year working with the GAAC and with our Washington representatives Williams and Jensen (George Olsen - representative ) to increase communications between that committee and RSA membership and to establish new and improved communication tools. One such effort was the production of a “white paper” detailing the impact of heavy alcohol use on our society, its costs, and some effects of treatment. The Executive Committee had considerable input into this effort, and it was reviewed by NIAAA for accuracy. It is available to members to utilize in communications with various entities. Also, the activities of the NAPE Committee under Carlton Erickson have begun to integrate with the work of the GAAC. This effort is in its infancy. Hopes are that this can be expanded. Part of the advocacy effort was to “reach out” to other organizations and entities that might share a common goal with RSA. To that end, George Olsen and I met with the Executive Director of FAVOR and initiated discussions on how we could work together to enhance alcohol research as well as to transfer scientific knowledge to the lay public. A project whereby the RSA sponsored “EurekaAlerts” will be placed on the FAVOR website (viewed by approximately 30,000 members) has been initiated. A new group called “The Friends of NIAAA” has been initiated under the effort of Geoff Mumford from the American Psychological Association. George Olsen and I attended an inaugural meeting in Washington, DC. There will be a follow-up meeting here at the RSA meeting this year. Dr. Carlo DiClemente has agreed to be the RSA representative to this group. Other efforts of the GAAC will be presented and discussed by Co-Chairs Sara Jo Nixon and Steve Treistman, including work on support of the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Parity legislation.
- It was decided that the RSA website needs considerable updating of look and content. Almost all committee chairs indicated that the website function could better assist them in their work. In consultation with Debby Sharp, RSA Secretary, Mary Larimer, has begun the process of writing and distributing an RFA to contract out website design and approved functionality. The Executive Committee approved funds for this effort that should serve the Society well into the future. It is anticipated that work on the website will start in earnest after the RSA meeting this year and be finished in time for the submission and registration process of next year’s meeting.

- There was some discussion during the year about diversification of the Society's financial holdings. Right now, all money is in CD's and money market funds. While this is a very conservative investment, there was concern that over the long term this approach might not be the best for the Society. Treasurer, Ken Leonard, started the process of identifying a professional money manager to assist in evaluating this situation. However, given the state of the financial markets, the Executive Committee did not feel pressured to move forward with this idea at this time. This remains, though, something that needs attention going forward.
- RSA has an open ended contract with Williams and Jensen for representation in Washington, DC. The contract and services rendered need to be evaluated periodically. Recently, RSA has been approached by another firm coming with high recommendations from trusted RSA members. I would highly recommend during the next year that the Executive Committee appoint an ad hoc committee to review the situation and make recommendations.

There were many other issues discussed and resolved - and a few remain open. Being President of RSA was an invaluable experience for me and provided a sense of achievement. Working with such marvelous individuals is always a joy. It is with great trust, and with the warmest of regards, that I will hand over the Presidency to Dr. Peter Monti at the end of the 2008 Annual Meeting. I will continue to support the Society in whatever manner is necessary. I thank all of you for the opportunity to serve the Society in this capacity.