

Sally R. Shott MD – President SENTAC 2006

Like many who have held leadership positions in SENTAC, I say with pride that the annual SENTAC meeting is my favorite meeting of the year!

SENTAC was the first meeting that I attended as a resident. It was in Denver and Chuck Myer introduced me to everyone. This experience helped to confirm my decision to specialize in pediatric otolaryngology.


SENTAC was also the first meeting where I presented a paper. It was a very positive experience and was instrumental in my desire to pursue an academic career. This was in Philadelphia and I delivered my first child just 2 weeks later (he was a little early).

I remember the meeting in New York City, in the hotel next to the World Trade Center. Not only did we have the banquet at Windows on the World, on the top floor of the World Trade Center, but a fire alarm went off in the middle of the night and I ended up on top of one of the smaller World Trade buildings when we had to evacuate. So sad to think that this meeting location would later take on such serious and solemn meanings.

It is for me, like for many of us, the atmosphere of SENTAC meetings that I love. SENTAC is a smaller, more intimate meeting, where even the medical students and residents get to meet and interact with “the big names”. It is the camaraderie, the open discussion, the opportunity to speak to more senior academic experts early in one’s career that keep us coming back every year. It is also the chance for those of us, now more senior members, to hear and learn from the ‘experts of the future’. This more personal environment allows these “big names” to quickly become one’s colleagues and friends. At the larger meetings, everyone is running between sessions, politicking. This often lacks feelings of collegiality and group experience. SENTAC fosters more conversation about papers presented and encourages more discussions regarding one’s own experiences regarding topics presented. Comments are presented with the utmost respect and this meeting is known as a good place to present one’s first paper.

SENTAC always believed in the need for an interdisciplinary approach to many of the problems encountered in pediatric otolaryngology. As our specialty has become more sophisticated and as our expertise has progressed, tackling more difficult problems that need solving, this truly insightful and visionary goal of the SENTAC founders has become even more important. SENTAC is the only organization whose purpose is to encourage interaction and collaboration between ENT, Speech Pathology, Audiology, and Pediatricians.

My year as President of SENTAC was one of the highlights of my career. I am very proud of initiating the Travel Scholarship Program that has continued to be very successful. I wear my SENTAC pin, first

distributed that year, with pride!  As is the custom, I was then the Program Chairman for the following year’s meeting in Milwaukee. Although everyone questioned the wisdom of a meeting so far north in December (and yes, it snowed), it was one of our best meetings. The meeting had the highest

attendance that we had ever had and great presentations. And we will always remember the bus tour with the flamboyant (intoxicated?) guide and the visit to the Miller Brewery.

