Report From the Chair
Paul Matherne, MD, FAHA

After attending Scientific Sessions in New Orleans, I am even more impressed by the work of our Council. The Council on Cardiovascular Disease in the Young has some of the most active committees that advance the mission of the American Heart Association, producing both patient education material and scientific statements. Our Council also continues to grow in size with most of our membership in the Premium Professional level. This level of membership provides benefits to both the member and the association. The Council would also like to encourage our members to apply to become Fellows of the American Heart Association (FAHA).

The American Heart Association is poised to continue to make significant contributions to advancing cardiovascular health from childhood through adulthood and our Council continues to be a key contributor. The next few years may provide some challenges to the association because of changes in our economy, so now more than ever Cardiovascular Disease in the Young members need to be advocates for cardiovascular health in children and for patients with congenital heart disease. I encourage you to get involved at your local American Heart Association and to consider coming to Lobby Day. Both of these activities are critical to advancing the association’s mission. Because of your efforts, our Council continues to be one of the strongest in the association. Please let me know if there are any initiatives or issues the Council should be addressing.

From the Editor
Walter H. Johnson Jr., MD; wjohnson@uab.edu

I am very excited to introduce myself as your new editor. It will be my pleasure to help implement many of the enhancements to our Council Web site and newsletter begun by our immediate past chair, Dr. Craig Sable. My colleagues serving on the CVDY Communications/Newsletter Committee, Dr. Arthur Pickoff (arthur.pickoff@wright.edu) and Dr. Ashwin Prakash (ashwin.prakash@cardio.chboston.org) and I look forward to working with you, the CVDY Council members, and we ask for your suggestions. Please send postings for Job Opportunities, People on the Move, Conference Announcements, requests for future newsletter content, and any advice for improving communication. We ask also that you give serious consideration to becoming an author of future content. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments.

NIH/NHLBI Educational Website for Parents Considering Clinical Research Participation

Research, especially clinical research, is a prime tool in the AHA’s mission of “Building healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.” Yet the challenges and ethical dilemmas of such research involving children are particularly acute.

Gail Pearson, MD, ScD, FAHA, chief, Heart Development & Structural Diseases Branch, NHLBI/NIH, a pediatric cardiologist herself and NIH liaison to the CVDY, recently reported on a new resource for CVDY Council members and their patients and families involved in or considering participation in clinical research.

NHLBI, which sponsors research through such mechanisms as the Pediatric Heart Network, has developed a Web resource for patients and families, “Children and Clinical Studies,” (www.ChildrenAndClinicalStudies.nhlbi.nih.gov) describing why research in children is important, how studies are conducted and what measures are taken to protect participants’ safety and privacy.

Online videos and Web pages include questions for parents to consider asking the research team when deciding whether to enroll their child in a study, how institutional review boards monitor studies for safety, who’s who on the research team, important terms (such as informed consent and assent) and how a child’s participation in a research study can affect the entire family.

“It’s perfectly natural for parents to be concerned about the risks and benefits of enrolling their child in a research study,” notes Dr. Pearson. “They should know that there is almost no other time in a child’s life that they will have as many safeguards brought to bear on their well-being than when they are in a clinical trial.”

Gathering information is key for parents to feel comfortable. As one parent notes in the online video: “get the information [about the study] so you can make an honest decision about what you’re going to be doing. Your child is sick, and this study may help, or it might not. But it may help someone, some day.”
Program Committee Report

Seema Mital, MD, FAHA, Chair

Scientific Sessions 2008 was an exciting and well-attended meeting. The attendees had an opportunity to hear exciting new results from leading researchers, including updates on basic, clinical and translational research in heart disease in the young as well as adults with congenital heart disease. We were particularly pleased to host a special session relating to challenges in managing adults with congenital heart disease.

Dr. Amnon Rosenthal from the University of Michigan gave the Alexander Nadas Memorial Lecture, “Repaired, Not Cured.” At the CVDY Council Dinner, Dr. Gil Wernovsky from Philadelphia gave the William J. Rashkind Memorial Lecture (which included an outstanding musical performance by him and his colleagues), “Notes, Charts, and Transposition: Music by the Pediatric Cardiovascular Ensemble.” Dr. Amnon Rosenthal was awarded the CVDY Meritorious Achievement Award and Dr. Gerald Berenson received the AHA Distinguished Scientist Award for their outstanding leadership in the field.

The recipients of the Outstanding Research Awards in Pediatric Cardiology were:

Tara Bharucha, Melbourne, Australia
Sudden Death in Children with CMP: Long-term Follow-up from a National Population-based Study

Catherine Limperopoulous, Montreal, Canada
Impaired Brain Metabolism in Fetuses with Congenital Heart Disease

Paul Monagle, Melbourne, Australia
Multicentre Randomized Trial Comparing the Efficacy of Heparin/Warfarin vs. Aspirin as Primary Thromboprophylaxis after the Fontan Procedure

The Program Committee for 2008–09 includes Seema Mital (Chair), Wolfgang Radtke, Bill Mahle, Andy Atz, Charles Canter, Macdonald Dick and Jonathan Chen. The committee requests that members submit suggestions for topics and speakers for Scientific Sessions 2009 in Orlando, Fla. Suggestions can be made through the AHA Web site or by e-mailing a committee member directly. We look forward to another exciting program next year.

Early Career and Mentoring Committee

William Mahle, MD, FAHA, Chair

This year’s Scientific Sessions included a number of programs tailored to the early career member and fellow in training. On Saturday the Annual Early Career Member and Fellow in Training Program included four breakout sessions directed toward clinical investigators, basic scientists and outcomes researchers as well as a meet-the-mentor event. The program was very well received and we can anticipate that next year another innovative program will be developed and available. This program is available to early career members without cost and provides tremendous opportunity to meet with a number of established investigators in the field and a chance to network with other trainees and early career members, both in pediatric and adult cardiology.

We were also able to provide a unique “Ask the Experts” session on training pediatric cardiologists. This session was led by Drs. Steven Neish, Wayne Franklin, Gerard Martin and Mike Brook. This interactive program touched on a number of important issues unique to pediatric cardiology including some of the most recent data looking at workforce projections. In addition, the session addressed the need for and approach to obtaining advance training, such as a 4th-year fellowship.

The Early Career and Mentoring Committee also met at Sessions and addressed a number of important issues including the Web page dedicated to early career and mentoring. Going forward the Committee of Early Career and Mentoring of the CVDY Council will join forces with the Young Investigators Committee of the Clinic Cardiology Council to provide a more robust Web page and educational tools for early career members.

And lastly, the Committee of Early Career and Mentoring announced the visiting professorships for 2009. Dr. Scott Baldwin from Vanderbilt University will be the visiting professor at Cornell Medical Center and Columbia University combined program, and Dr. Marlene Rabinovitch from Stanford University’s Lucille Packard Hospital will be a visiting professor at C. S. Mott Children’s Hospital in Ann Arbor, Mich.

Rheumatic Fever, Endocarditis and Kawasaki Disease (RFEKD) Committee

Michael Gewitz, MD, FAHA, Chair

The RFEKD Committee has reviewed extensive feedback concerning the IE guidelines published in late 2007 and has noted generally favorable comments throughout the literature. It was also noted that a “guidance” statement recently published by the NICE organization in the United Kingdom, which also has the power of establishing reimbursement profiles, actually went further than the AHA statement in declaring no indication at all for IE prophylaxis for dental procedures, regardless of patient condition. Members reported that much
work transpired to coordinate the IE guidelines with the new, recent AHA guidelines on valvular heart disease and on adults with congenital heart disease. The subcommittee has also begun a serious effort to develop a strategy to monitor both compliance with the AHA IE guidelines by dental practitioners and the impact of the guidelines on IE development itself. In other areas, a writing group, with members from the subcommittee, the Heart Rhythm Society, and the Clin Card Council is preparing a statement on “EP Device Infection Diagnosis and Management” which is nearing completion. The work will be reviewed by the entire subcommittee this winter, for release to SACC by spring 2009. Also, the subcommittee has begun organization of a new writing group to propose to the MOC “Revision of the Jones Criteria for Rheumatic Fever: Incorporation of Echocardiography.” Finally, at the recent very busy meeting of the subcommittee, approval to move ahead with development of a MOC proposal for a statement dealing with “The Role of Periodontal Disease in the Development of Cardiac Diseases” was discussed in detail and affirmed. Also, discussion was begun regarding the need to develop a systematic approach toward the assessment of long-term sequelae from Kawasaki disease, including its possible role in the development of early atherosclerotic changes in young adults.

Atherosclerosis, Hypertension, and Obesity in Youth (AHOY) Committee
Julia Steinberger, MD, MS, Chair

The AHOY Committee has historically been one of the most active committees of the CVDY Council. The high productivity of the committee has been maintained over the last year: currently there are five scientific statements in progress, with one awaiting MOC approval and the others in different stages between writing to awaiting publication. At Scientific Sessions 2008, the committee presented a seminar, “Are Kids Little Adults?” focused on novel cardiovascular risk factors in children, which was well received. The committee discussed suggested programs to be submitted for Scientific Sessions 2009. Additional discussion addressed the collaboration of AHOY with the Healthcare Pillar of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation (a program of the William J. Clinton Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for prevention and treatment of childhood obesity). This collaboration resulted in the “Childhood Obesity Summit” held in Arlington, Va. in December 2007, highlighting the intersection of healthcare practice and delivery, behavioral health and childhood obesity. The conference summary will be completed shortly and will lead to new ideas for research and scientific statements for the AHOY Committee. Participation from this committee on advocacy issues and Lobby Day has been high, and members are committed to continue these activities.

Adult Congenital Heart Disease Committee (ACHD)
Craig Sable, MD, FAHA, Co-Chair

The Adult Congenital Heart Disease Committee is working in coordination with the Congenital Cardiac Defects Committee to update and expand the “Adult Congenital Heart Disease” booklet on the Web site. This booklet will also include new pictures, printable PDF sections and updated links. Drs. Elyse Foster and Craig Sable, the committee co-chairs, co-authored an editorial on the recent ACHD guidelines. The committee is moving ahead with a scientific statement on “Recommendations for Preparing Adolescents with Congenital Heart Disease for Transition to Adulthood.”

The committee continues to work to expand ACHD content at Scientific Sessions. This year’s Tuesday afternoon abstract session was very well received.

Congenital Cardiac Defects Committee (CCD)
Craig Sable, MD, FAHA

The Congenital Cardiac Defects Committee has several projects that are ongoing. The revised “If your Child has a Congenital Heart Defect” booklet is in the final stages of editing and will go to press by the end of 2008. The print version of this booklet will likely be available by mid-February 2009. All sections of the booklet have been rewritten and many have been expanded including an extensive discussion on what to expect during cardiac surgery. All of the heart diagrams have been replaced with new and greatly improved versions. The Web version of this booklet will have even more expanded sections on each lesion and extensive links to other useful online information. Each section will be printable in PDF format to allow for customizable grouping of individual sections tailored to the needs of each patient and family. Many other Web site enhancements are underway in conjunction with the Communication Committee.

The CCD Committee is also involved in several scientific statements that are in various stages of production, “The Role of Pulse Oximetry Screening for Congenital Heart Disease” is nearing publication. Writing is progressing on “Interventions for Catheterization and Intervention in Children.” Several new projects were discussed including beginning the process for preparing a scientific statement on “Long-term Follow-up of Chemotherapy Effects in Children.”

The CCD Committee welcomes Dr. Charles Berul from Children’s Hospital in Boston and Dr. Craig Sable as incoming committee chair.