

Missouri

John Firth, President

Jeffrey Cavanaugh, Secretary/Treasurer

Mike LaFerla, Past President

This report will be a short one because COVID-19 has resulted in the cancelation of about everything except Zoom meetings. If 2020 had a symbol, I think it would be a dumpster fire. There were a number of Zoom meetings to discuss all alternatives for the MSO that was to be hosted in Chicago. Unfortunately, because of local restrictions and too many uncontrollable variables, we agreed to cancel this year's MSO in-person meeting. As an alternative, the MSO has joined the PCSO, SWSO and RMO for a Virtual Meeting that should give a lot of valuable information. So if you haven't signed up yet please do so.

Leadership changes will soon take effect within the MSO. Missouri's own Dr. **Mark Dake** will move to the position of President-Elect, Dr. **Nellie Kim-Weroha** will move into the Secretary-Treasurer position and Dr. **Scott Arbit** will be President of the MSO taking over for Dr. **Ali Fallgatter**, who did an excellent job under very trying times. Maybe she should get a mulligan? I'm betting she would respectfully decline.

In Joplin, Missouri a new dental school will be breaking ground soon. Kansas City University, which built and opened a medical school about 5 years ago after the Joplin tornado, will be expanding to start dentistry with an initial class of 60 starting in 2022. They have a rural and underserved health plan focus to expose their students to areas of need for the underserved. The new dean, Dr. **Linda Niessen**, was recently named as well.

That is all the information I have to share in this 2020 year that can't end soon enough. Hopefully 2021 will allow use all to meet again in person.

Michael LaFerla

Joplin, Missouri