

A Successful SNM Annual Meeting in Atlanta

Highly favorable comment keeps coming in on the recently concluded SNM Annual Meeting in Atlanta. And judging from attendee's remarks, the Technologist Section program was a major contributing factor to the success of the entire meeting. Specifically, the Technologist program received high marks for the quality of its scientific papers, the number and variety of offerings, and the flexibility of its organization.

Singled out for particular praise was the organization of sessions into self-contained, one-day units. This allowed individuals to maximize VOICE credit, even when their attendance was limited to one or two days.

Considering the quality and accessibility of program offerings, it should come as no surprise that turnout was excellent. Technologist Section Scientific Program Chairman John Reilly comments: "Virtually every session was well attended, even the early morning ones." Mr. Reilly adds that an unexpected benefit of the way in which the program was organized was the high turnout of local technologists, many of whom had little time to spare but who felt that the new structure could put their time to good use.

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...And now it's on to Louisville for the Tech Section Midwinter Meeting

Now is the time to start thinking of mint juleps, quarter horses, and an informative educational experience.

The Annual Winter Meeting of the Technologist Section of the Society of Nuclear Medicine will be held Feb. 7-9, 1980 at the Galt House in Louisville, KY. For the first time, the meeting will start on a Thursday afternoon and run through Saturday afternoon, leaving Sunday for sight-seeing and a leisurely trip home.

Since there will be newcomers to our field and/or this meeting, certain subjects (but not specific talks) will be repeated from previous sessions. The six tracks planned for presentation will include: Clinical, Licensure, Radioimmunoassay, Education, Computer Technology, and a Quality Control Workshop. Participants are encouraged to submit abstracts for presentation of scientific papers and exhibits. (See box ad in this issue for information regarding submission of abstracts.) Innovative individual sessions are being planned for inclusion in the Clinical and Computer Technology tracks. All tracks in this year's program can be used to obtain individual VUE credits. CEU credit is available for those completing attendance and examination requirements.

Complete program descriptions and registration information will be available in early December; however, now is not too early to start making the appropriate arrangements with your place of employment.

Updated information regarding this meeting can be obtained from the Scientific Program Co-Chairmen: *Liz Joyce*, Chief Technologist, Nuclear Medicine Department, Albert Einstein Medical Center, York & Tabor Roads, Philadelphia, PA 19141, (215) 329-0700, ext. 6564, or *Marge Wilson*, Chief Technologist, Nuclear Medicine Department, Muhlenberg Hospital, Park Ave. & Randolph Road, Plainfield, NJ 07060, (201) 668-2285.

National Council Delegates Meet in Atlanta

A full agenda marked the Technologist Section National Council Delegates meeting in Atlanta. Among the items brought before the meeting were: changing the meeting site for the 1981 Technologist Section Annual Meeting; job descriptions for Section officers and committee members; establishment of a Section

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Technologist Section: AWARDS FROM ATLANTA

Scientific Papers

FIRST PLACE

"Diuretic Augmented Tc-99m DTPA Renography: A Technique to Distinguish Functional from Obstructive Hydronephrosis" M.J. Tuscan, J.H. Thrall, S.A. Koff and J.W. Keyes, Jr., University of Michigan Medical Center, Ann Arbor, MI.

SECOND PLACE

"A Phantom for Clinical Evaluation of Total System Resolution" Gary Enos, Holy Family Hospital, Department of Nuclear Medicine, Spokane, WA.

THIRD PLACE

"Mobile Scintillation Camera Venography Technique" Pauline Bayer, Harrisburg Hospital, Harrisburg, PA.

Scientific Exhibits

FIRST PLACE

"Evaluation of Cerebrospinal Fluid Diversionary Shunts with Tc-99m DTPA" S.M. Thorp, Milwaukee Childrens Hospital, Milwaukee, WI.

SECOND PLACE

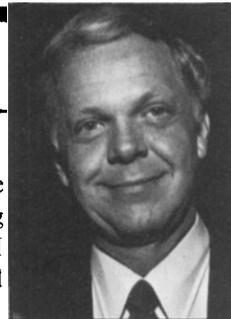
"A New Quality Control Device-The Bearing Phantom" J.R. Carr, R.J. Corcoran, F.B. Atkins, R.W. Kyle and R.J. Kaminski, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.

THIRD PLACE

"A Dynamic Heart Phantom for Simulating Left Ventricular Imaging Characteristics" J.R. Carr, J.R. Petty, A.T. Yates, R.W. Kyle, R.J. Corcoran and R.J. Kaminski, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.

Message from the President

GEORGE W. ALEXANDER, JR.
President
Technologist Section



During the last year I have been troubled to hear that some technologists believe they receive little benefit from joining the Society of Nuclear Medicine. Typical of their comments are: "My dues are too high." "What do I receive as a result of belonging to SNM?" "Why do I have to belong to both SNM and the Technologist Section?"

Perhaps the best reason for belonging to the Society is that it is one of the very few professional organizations devoted to a specific field of medicine. "Communication" is the key word here, for it is rare to find a multidisciplinary organization whose members totally support one another to attain a common goal—in this case, to improve and develop the field of nuclear medicine through communication among all its branches. It has been with pride that I have associated with physicians, physicists, chemists, radiopharmacists, computer experts, instrumentation experts, academicians, and other interested persons, each with his own area of expertise and totally supportive of all other disciplines. Our strength is evident when one sees a particular group within the Society encounter a problem to which the other disciplines quickly respond with innovative ideas and solutions.

To cite but a few reasons for joining the Society we have the following:

- (1) Publications that provide us with the most up-to-date technical information about our profession (*JNM*, books, *Newsline* and pamphlets).
- (2) Annual meetings of SNM, chap-

ter meetings and short seminars, which provide us with multifaceted continuing scientific education.

(3) Effective government relations—information and representation are provided at the local, state and federal levels by the Government Relations Committee of SNM.

(4) Placement services that are available to the entire membership.

(5) Sections and Councils that exist to provide special services to meet the needs of smaller groups within the Society who are involved in a particular discipline.

These services are obtained economically through a National Office which provides a multiplicity of services. For instance, if the publishing staff of the National Office did not exist, *JNMT* (which you receive as a member of the Technologist Section) would be a great deal more expensive to produce because we would have to contract outside staff to perform the publishing duties. If SNM did not exist, the Technologist Section would also have to acquire office space and personnel for other services such as bookkeeping, membership, and continuing education. With the Technologist Section representing 36% of the total Society, it is obvious that technologists derive at least that percentage of office space, personnel time and services from the national office. To this end, the Society offsets expenses of the Technologist Section of over \$100,000 per year.

And what of our certifying agency, NMTCB? Did you know that we

would not have had a certifying body had SNM not endorsed conceptually and financially, NMTCB?

If you did not support the Society financially, Technologist Section dues would be significantly higher. In checking the dues structure of many other professional organizations, I found our total dues (SNM and the Technologist Section combined) to be consistently lower than most organizations, and our registration fees for conventions substantially less than most. Also, most *do not* offer professional journals as a part of annual dues assessment, and some have no journals available to their membership.

And last but not least, any member of the Technologist Section can go to the Society Board of Trustees or the Business Meeting, be recognized and speak out on issues, and feel assured that he/she has the attention and support of all colleagues. The President of the Technologist Section has a strong voice in SNM, representing the Section at Trustee and Business Meetings.

The Society has worked long and hard to achieve professional excellence and is viewed by other medical fields as a *great* accomplishment in a very short period of time. Be proud of your organization and support it. Nuclear Medicine has been good to us all, and the chief reason for our success is SNM.

Annual Meeting in Atlanta

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A high point of the entire Annual Meeting was the yearly Technologist Section party. This year's theme was "A Georgia Country Bash," featur-

ing down-home cooking and Southern style entertainment. Comment on the party ranged from "terrific" to "fantastic, completely unbelievable." Summing up, the technologist party put the icing on the cake of a highly successful and enjoyable Annual Meeting.

TECHNOLOGIST SECTION OFFICERS 1980

President: George W. Alexander, CNMT
President-Elect: Michael L. Cianci, CNMT
Secretary: Jennifer A. Matthews, CNMT
Treasurer: Shelley D. Hartnett, CNMT
Historian: Margaret M. Perry, CNMT

As the 1979 examination cycle nears completion, the 1980 examination process is being initiated. The next NMTCB meeting on October 12-14, 1979 in St. Louis will mark the transition from one cycle to another. Using the examination data from September, the overall performance of the examinees will be reviewed, and a pass-fail determination will be made. The Board will then review the psychometric analysis of each item. Items eligible for replacement will be identified. At the time of the October meeting, the new item submissions will be available for preliminary review. Item submissions are not only requested from appointed item writers, but from anyone who would like to have input into the NMTCB examination. With the Task Analysis now published, a basic examination content outline is available to be used in writing items. If there are questions regarding format, please contact the NMTCB office. By reviewing the recent examination statistics, existing item bank and the new items, the Board will know the content areas on which to concentrate prior to the March 1980 meeting, where the final form for 1980 will be completed. The effort to maintain and improve the quality of the NMTCB examination is an ongoing process.

In addition to providing a competency-based examination for the profession, the NMTCB is representing the certification needs of NMTs in the development of national standards. The NMTCB recently submitted an in-depth response to an FDA call for comments in the Federal Register on 13 questions regarding the establishment of national standards for medical radiation technologists. Nuclear medicine technologists were included in this group.

The National Commission of Health Certifying Agencies (NCHCA) continues to make progress in developing national standards for certifying agencies. This development facilitates the standardization of the certification process for health care practitioners. Through the Commission, certifying agencies will receive the recognition their members need for employment and, potentially, federal and third-party reimbursement for procedures they perform. The NMTCB participated in the formation of the NCHCA and continues with representation on its Executive Council.

At the Atlanta meeting in June, the NMTCB met in early morning sessions to discuss issues and policies. Problems have arisen in determining whether applicants for recognition of previous certification who were cer-

The NMTCB: Successful 1979 Stimulates 1980 Enthusiasm

Mark I. Muilenburg, CNMT
Chairman
NMTCB

tified in 1978 were certified before or after the first NMTCB examination on September 15, 1978. It was decided to accept applicants certified before December 31, 1978 for recognition of previous certification. After much deliberation, this was decided to be the fairest approach. The final application deadline for recognition of previous certification remains September, 1980.

The examination fee for the 1980 examination was also reviewed in-depth. In light of the costs involved in providing a high quality examination and maintaining the Board's activities and operations, the fee was set at \$60. Since the initial fee was determined in 1977, costs have increased. The contract for examination development and psychometric analysis itself has increased over 50%. A separate NMTCB office with staff responsible only for NMT certification has increased Board credibility and responsiveness to the certification needs of NMTs; but this increased efficiency and effectiveness also affects cost. The examination process requires Board-funded meetings in October and March, separate from other meetings. Participation in the NCHCA, which is crucial for NMTs, also has a significant financial impact. These are some of the major considerations in the fee increase. This higher fee does not provide a build-up of excess funds. The cost of a certification board providing an independent identity as certified nuclear medicine technologists (CNMTs) is significant. When viewed in the perspective of a professional lifetime, the importance of this identity certainly offsets the fee.

Another decision made by the Board is that only on-the-job training received in the U.S.A. will be considered for eligibility. The evaluation of equivalent experience in other countries is extremely difficult to standardize.

The application response for the 1979 examination has been extremely good. There have been 850 applications received, and at this writing the number of examinees will be approximately 800, compared with 650 in 1978. There has been great support from NMT educators; most of the applicants are from accredited schools.

Additional data regarding how an NMT program did overall on a national scale will be provided this year, while still protecting examinee confidentiality of scores.

As the NMTCB goes through the examination cycle transition and continues its quest for excellence, your input and support is very important and is actively sought.

As Chairman of the Membership Committee, my primary function is: (1) to promote membership, and (2) to respond to the problems and dissatisfactions of new members.

George Alexander, the previous Chairman of the Membership committee, directed his efforts to disseminating information to members in order that they better understand both the organization of the Technologist Section and the membership application process. I believe it is worthwhile to continue in this direction.

A theme has developed in sifting through the comments of disgruntled members and former technologist members. That theme is not centered on dues increase, although this is a major concern, but rather one of communication difficulties encountered with VOICE, dues invoices, address changes, etc. The result is that members become disenchanted and fail to actively support the Society and Technologist Section, or worse to drop their membership. With a new administrative support staff in the National Office, this is an opportune time to improve ourselves.

The appointment of Paul Hubbard to the newly created position of Deputy Director of the Society of Nuclear Medicine, is a great administrative achievement for the Technologist Section. Paul's primary responsibility is to serve the Technologist Section's needs. This year's Membership Committee will work with Mr. Hubbard to initiate, implement and refine new procedures in those areas where you, as members, have identified difficulties. Implementation of constructive changes takes time, especially with a new support staff, so be patient.

A goal of the Committee this year is to contact technolo-

Maintaining and Increasing Technologist Section Membership

Michael L. Cianci, CNMT
President-Elect
Technologist Section

gists who were previously members of the Technologist Section, and to investigate the reasons why these individuals did not continue as members. A concerted effort will be made to renew these memberships. This loss of members represents approximately 9% of the total Technologist Section membership.

The Credentials and Membership Committee of the Society of Nuclear Medicine successfully petitioned the Board of Trustees in Atlanta on two proposals: the first allows a Technologist Section member, who is eligible to hold either Full or Associate membership in the Society, to request

reclassification as a Technologist member. In essence, this allows technologists maintaining an Associate or Full membership in the Society of Nuclear Medicine to change their category of membership to that of a Technologist member and thereby pay less dues; the second proposal approved by the Board of Trustees initiated a \$10 Society of Nuclear Medicine application processing fee effective January 1, 1980. After this date, individuals applying for simultaneous membership in the Society of Nuclear Medicine and the Technologist Section will only be required to pay a single \$10 application fee, \$5 of which will go to the Technologist Section. Prior to this, the Technologist Section had assessed a \$5 application processing fee. This separate processing fee will be discontinued, or rather incorporated into the single processing fee. The rationale for assessing this application processing fee is to help support the extra expense and effort associated with processing applications, and to provide incentive to keep membership current—by making it cheaper to pay dues on time than to reapply.

National Council Meets

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committee on socio-economic affairs; model bills and job descriptions for technologists; and numerous other items.

On recommendation of the New York Chapter, the delegates voted to shift the site for their 1981 mid-winter meeting from Atlantic City, NJ to New Orleans, LA. The delegates also voted to ask the Society's Board of Trustees to hold its 1981 interim meeting conjointly with the technol-

ogists, and that invitation has been provisionally accepted.

The Section's Task Force on Future Directions proposed, and the Council voted to create, a Section committee on socio-economic affairs. An *ad hoc* committee, with Glen Isserstedt as its chairman, was appointed by the Section's new President, George Alexander, until such time as the bylaws can be amended to include the new committee.

A recommendation of the Scientific Program Committee was also approved by the Delegates. This

would create continuing education courses for technologists similar to the Society's Pre-Annual Meeting courses. A separate fee would be charged for these. The purpose of this is twofold: first, there was a need felt for more formally structured continuing education, and second, this format will generate revenue for the Section.

This report represents only a few highlights of the delegates' activities in Atlanta. All in all, the National Council Delegates meeting was clearly highly productive.