

MEDIA STARS CONTEST RESULTS

Despite a one-month deadline extension, participation in the 1987 Nuclear Medicine Week Media Stars contest fell short of 1986 by almost 90 percent. Based on comments and suggestions from approximately 60 busy nuclear medicine departments, the 1988 contest will be redesigned to better suit time and staff constraints.

According to written comments from chief technologists, and a telephone conversation with Nuclear Medicine Week Task Force Chairman Art Hall, CNMT, many departments chose to skip the contest rather than dedicate scarce resources to compete with the level of mass media exposure achieved in 1986.

The handful of 1987 entrants seemed to avoid the problem by focusing less on media exposure and more on direct communities. The focus was typical of many departments that participated in Nuclear Medicine Week but did not enter the contest, according to Technologist Section Administrator Virginia Pappas.

The judging, however, turned out to be more difficult than expected. Two very thorough and effective entries managed to tie for first place, and will split the \$1,000 departmental award and \$250 honorarium, to be awarded at the 1988 Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

Chief Nuclear Medicine Technologist Colleen A. Sharkey said the nuclear medicine staff at the A.I. duPont Institute—a 180-bed pediatric hospital in Wilmington, Delaware—“got a lot more into” the second Nuclear Medicine Week Media Stars Contest than the first. Almost every aspect of the institute’s entry clearly contributed to a practical need, such as patient comfort, staff education, or increased referrals.

Posters were designed to answer questions most often asked by pediatric patients and their parents. The posters were displayed in the lobby during Nuclear Medicine Week. Now they occupy permanent spots in the waiting room. Ms. Sharkey says parents and children reading the posters have paid the staff “a million compliments”.

The physicians also displayed some of the institute’s research achievements and clinical capabilities with posters designed and constructed for previous Society of Nuclear Medicine Meetings. One of these posters described a noninvasive test for neurofibromatosis that helped surgeons correct a spinal curvature in a 19-year-old patient. The patient’s story attracted local media interest and was also featured in the annual report of the institute’s sponsor, the Nemours Foundation.

Ms. Sharkey also said that frequent seminars by physicians, and the staff’s efforts to make patients and their families “feel at home” have contributed significantly to referrals. At the A.I. duPont Institute, pediatric nuclear medicine patients are not sedated, except on request of the doctor. “Most of the time the child plays games,” said Ms. Sharkey. “It’s up to the staff

to entertain the child” throughout the exam, which could be two hours for a bone scan.

“The facility is constantly on the grow, academically and clinically,” she said. But it’s also a “unique facility” where the staff can “have a good time at work with children.”

Other institute activities included articles in the hospital newspaper and a direct mail newsletter to the local community. Besides publicizing Nuclear Medicine Week, the articles carried a good bit of information, and a number of patients have requested reprints to send to relatives in the western United States and Canada, according to Sharkey.

Activities beyond the scope of Nuclear Medicine Week include in-service training for staff, pediatric training for technologists at Delaware Technical Community College, and a proposed one-day pediatric teaching track for the Technologist’s Section.

The institute’s contest entry arrived in a detailed videotape of pediatric nuclear medicine at the institute, which Ms. Sharkey says will be used for orientation and in-service training.

“Well ahead” of Nuclear Medicine Week, Dee Osargent, CNMT and Director of Nuclear Medicine at Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla, California, entered the planning stage of a major exercise in group cooperation that culminated in more than 200 visitors to a departmental open house on July 29.

“No one said ‘no’ to me,” said Ms. Osargent. “Each [hospital] department had at least one person involved in one way or another. . . . There was a lot of cooperation and interest.” She said additional help and guests came from the Scripps Memorial Hospital in Encinitas that chose to contribute to the La Jolla effort instead of launching a separate event. Ms. Osargent said she also got a “good response from sales reps and pharmaceutical companies,” such as GE and MediPhysics.

Flyers announcing the open house were mailed to 700 area physician’s offices, and press releases were distributed to local newspapers and radio and television stations. Ms. Osargent said that most of the 200 attendees were hospital employees. She said that visitors from outside the hospital included a number of former patients who “came back to see more of what it was all about.”

A number of physicians and staff people also visited, and Ms. Osargent said the physician spent a lot of time explaining nuclear procedures “doctor-to-doctor”, which she says may have drawn a number of referrals.

Based on Chief Tech Osargent’s description, visitors found a comprehensive educational experience. Technologists were positioned throughout the department to demonstrate equipment or present slides and videos. The demonstration even included a moving tomography camera with a “resuscitation Annie” on the table.

She said that people were “still stopping me in the halls, several weeks later” to express their “gratefulness for the opportunity [to learn] what nuclear medicine really did.” She

added that the Scripps foundation, which contributed computer-made nuclear medicine banners to the open house, took the unusual step of describing the departmental event in its publication to friends of the hospital, physicians, and investors.

Ms. Osargent described the very enthusiastic response as "surprising," and said that in terms of building departmental morale, "it was definitely a winner." Chief Tech Sharkey of the A.I. duPont Institute voiced similar sentiments in describing the "sense of pride and accomplishment" that technologists were able to share during Nuclear Medicine Week.

Despite these inspiring activities, the small number of contest entries and flurry of response to the deadline extension conveyed a clear message: Most nuclear medicine departments are too busy or lack the staff to pursue a specific media-oriented contest. Since the idea behind the contest is to reward and encourage what you do without adding to what you have to do, the rules will change a bit next year.

Next year's contest will be easier to win. Instead of one award, GE Medical Systems will offer three regional ones. Hopefully this will allow for more attention to local efforts.

The 1988 contest will also be easier to enter. Rather than requesting a separate entry form, a panel of judges from both GE and the SNM will review the responses to the SNM's nuclear medicine week survey.

Exact details are yet to be worked out and should appear in the Society of Nuclear Medicine's 1988 Nuclear Medicine Week Guidelines.

*Hassaun Jones-Bey**

*Hassaun Jones-Bey writes for the Brady Company, the public relations firm that administered the contest for GE and the SNM.

ANNUAL MEETING PREVIEW

The 35th Annual Meeting of the Society of Nuclear Medicine will convene this year at the George R. Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco, California from Tuesday, June 14 through Friday, June 17. As in past years, the convention will prove to be an informative and enjoyable session for everyone involved in nuclear medicine.

The excitement begins this year even before the members officially convene, with pre-meeting seminars for senior technologists taking place Monday, June 13. The seminars will cover such topics as "Cardiovascular Nuclear Medicine," "Correlative Imaging," and "Radiopharmaceutical Chemistry." The cost for the seminars is \$50 for members of the Society of Nuclear Medicine, and \$70 for nonmembers. A Technologist Education Program will run throughout the convention, and will feature education lectures, workshops, scientific papers, and posters.

Continuing Education courses to be featured at the convention will include "Fundamentals of Nuclear Medicine Proce-

dures," "Special Imaging Procedures," "Advanced Imaging," "Managing a Nuclear Medicine Department," "Radiation Safety," and "Pediatric Imaging." Approximately 12.0 VOICE credits may be claimed for these courses.

On the exposition floor at this year's convention will be more than 100 exhibitors. Featuring every major manufacturer of nuclear medicine products, the displays will include cameras, computers, radiopharmaceuticals, publications, and accessories.

On the social side, an ice-breaker for convention-goers will be held Monday, June 13, and the Technologist Party will be held Thursday June 16. Specific information about these events can be obtained at the meeting.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to experience the beauty and excitement of San Francisco by taking one of the many tours offered during the convention. One excursion offers a tour of the Muir Woods and Sausalito. The Muir Woods, a 550-acre preserve of California coastal redwood trees, boasts trees hundreds of years old, and hundreds of feet tall. A self-guided walk will take you through a cathedral-like valley filled with ferns, wild flowers, and unusual redwood burls.

In Sausalito, a quaint village renowned for its beautiful harbors and artistic appeal, you can browse and shop in any of the many unique shops and galleries.

Another excursion choice might be a walking tour of Chinatown. The three-hour excursion will give a close-up view of the area—the largest Chinese settlement outside of China, with a population estimated between 50,000 and 100,000 in an 18-square block area. Information on all tours will be available at the convention.

Registration fees for the annual meeting are \$120 for Society of Nuclear Medicine technologist members who register before May 16, and \$140 after May 16. For nonmember technologists, the fee is \$215 for those who register before May 16, and \$235 for those who register after May 16. For more information, contact The Society of Nuclear Medicine, Registrar, 136 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016-6760, or call (212)889-0717.

Todd Hummel

NUCLEAR MEDICINE WEEK PREVIEW

The third annual observance of Nuclear Medicine Week (NMW) will occur this year from July 31 through August 6. As in past years, this event will offer the medical community as well as the general public an opportunity to heighten awareness of the progress nuclear medicine has made in the diagnosis and treatment of disease.

The event, sponsored by The Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) and Technologist Section, is successful in three ways: hospitals educate their communities about both radiation in general, and nuclear medicine procedures specifically; within

hospitals, staff not involved in nuclear medicine learn how the department helps patients; and the special recognition boosts morale within nuclear medicine departments.

As in past years, the SNM will offer "Guidelines for Promoting Nuclear Medicine Week," a pamphlet that includes information on activities such as open houses, group talks, press coverage, writing press releases, contacting talk show programs, arranging public service announcements, obtaining proclamations, and other promotions. The guide is an invaluable resource for anyone planning to promote NMW.

In past years, nuclear medicine professionals have led tours through their facilities, sponsored "fun-runs," and held picnics to celebrate the observance.

As a tie-in with NMW, General Electric (GE) Medical Systems will once again sponsor its Media Stars Contest, which awards a \$250 honorarium to an individual responsible for planning and executing the most effective public relations campaign for NMW, and a \$1,000 donation to that individual's hospital or institution. Awards for the winners of the 1987 Media Stars contest will be presented at the SNM Annual Meeting in San Francisco in June (see page 47).

As in previous years, the SNM will make available posters, buttons, and stickers to support NMW. A small supply of each will be sent to each Chapter. Additional posters, buttons, and stickers will be sold at cost to hospitals, institutions, and individuals interested in promoting NMW. For more information, contact Virginia M. Pappas, CAE, The Society of Nuclear Medicine, 136 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016-6760 (212)889-0717.

MEMBERS ELIGIBLE FOR PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

SNM insurance administrator, Albert H. Wohlers & Co., announces a special enrollment period for the Professional Liability Insurance Plan available to members of the Technologist Section. June 1, 1988 is the closing date to apply for this coverage.

This plan provides the necessary financial backing needed in the event of a malpractice suit. Members applying for this coverage will receive up to \$1,000,000 protection per claim with a total of up to \$1,000,000 of annual coverage. Benefits to pay legal and court costs are also built into this plan in addition to the \$1,000,000 available for settlement costs.

Employees and self-employed SNM members are all eligible for this coverage. The increase in medical malpractice lawsuits makes coverage of this kind desirable to all medical health practitioners. The plan comes with a money-back guarantee. Anyone not completely satisfied with their coverage can return their insurance certificate within 30 days for a complete refund.

Complete details and enrollment materials for this plan will be sent to all members in April. For further information contact: Albert H. Wohlers & Co., Administrator, SNM Group Insurance Plans, 1500 Higgins Road, Park Ridge, IL 60069-5750. Or call toll-free 1-800-323-2106. In Illinois: 1-312-698-2221.

REFLECTIONS PAST AND PRESENT AN ADMINISTRATOR'S VIEW

"I cared a lot and worked hard because of it. When I saw that things needed to be done, I just jumped in and did them." The Technologist Section leadership acknowledges that determination, caring, and the capacity for hard work are just a few of the admirable talents that Virginia Pappas, CAE, has brought to her roles as Technologist Section Administrator and Deputy Executive Director of the Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM). Ms. Pappas, who marks her 10th anniversary with the Society in February, has been Technologist Section Administrator for the last eight years. Indeed, when one reviews the history, development, and growth of the Section over



Virginia Pappas, CAE, Technologist Section Administrator and Deputy Executive Director of The Society of Nuclear Medicine.

the past 18 years (see *A Glimpse Into the Past. J Nucl Med Technol* 1985;2:110-112) it becomes apparent that her dedication and commitment have played a primary role in furthering Section activities.

When Ms. Pappas joined the Society in February 1978 as Manager of Administration, she worked closely with the Section's Board, Council members, and the Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board (NMTCB). Ms. Pappas recalls those early days as being quite "busy." The departure of Paul Hubbard, the first Technologist Section Administrator and Deputy Executive Director of the Society, in 1981 created a

vacancy in this necessary position. Ms. Pappas was the obvious choice as the next administrator and in June 1981 assumed the position that she has held to this day. "When I first started working here," she remarks, "I had no idea that any of this was going to happen." However, by working in tandem with the Section's leadership, Ms. Pappas has watched the Section achieve an amazing list of accomplishments.

Goals and Accomplishments

In her capacity as Technologist Section Administrator, Ms. Pappas acts as liaison to the leadership and membership of the Section, as well as to individuals in other allied health organizations. As she sees it, "the membership originates the ideas, and I provide the continuity." Wayne Wcislo, CNMT (Past President 1986-1987) comments: "Virginia was extremely helpful and knowledgeable during my tenure as President-Elect and President." Dorothy Duffy Price, CNMT (Past President 1982-1983) supports this view: "Virginia has made an outstanding contribution to the Section's growth. She realized the vision to address external changes in the nuclear medicine technology environment. She picked up on the idea for [the] long-range future planning" [necessary to the Section's growth]. According to Ms. Price, these ideas have been successfully integrated into the Section's Annual Meeting program. Maintaining these contacts involves lots of telephone calls, loads of paperwork, and travel, but the results are well worth the effort. It was through contacts made at the American Association of Allied Health Professions (ASAHP) Man Power Task Force Meetings, for example, that helped to identify nuclear medicine technologists as line items in the Bureau of Labor Statistics survey, American Hospitals survey and in career booklets by other allied health organizations. This spirit of teamwork has been instrumental in achieving other Section goals.

During the beginning stages of Ms. Pappas' tenure, a limiting factor in the growth of the Section was financial dependence on the Society. At the time, the bulk of the Section's funding was provided by a subsidy from the Society. While working with the Section's Finance Task Force, Ms. Pappas recalls "that the motivation was there but there were obstacles. . . (and) . . . deficit problems. . ." Working with the idea that "Section revenue should be supplied from Section activities," the restructuring of Section funding (through payment of Section membership dues directly to the Section and advertising revenues from *JNMT*, for example) garnered not only financial independence from the SNM but respect for the Section throughout the Society. It is this view of maintaining the identity of nuclear medicine technologists and nuclear medicine technology that underlies the thrust of Section activities.

This identity factor is addressed in the Human Resources Survey. Until these data were compiled, there was insufficient information available about the nuclear medicine technology community (see *J Nucl Med Technol* 1985;3:187-199). As Ms.

Pappas observes: "This survey provided the government and other health organizations with vital information about the field." Ms. Price notes that "this [survey] would not have gotten off the ground without Virginia's valuable assistance." In working with the Human Resource Task Force, the developers of this document, Ms. Pappas reemphasizes the importance of maintaining professional contacts. "At a meeting in Washington, Duffy Price and I met Jerry McClendon at the Bureau of Health Professions. Through him we obtained grants for funding, along with the free services of a statistical consultant and computer assistance." Furthermore, Ms. Pappas cites the DRG Survey (*J Nucl Med Technol* 1986;3:185-189) as another significant Section accomplishment "because it provided the most current information about the industry."

Although she is not directly involved in the activities of Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board (NMTCB), Ms. Pappas believes that the development and growth of the NMTCB is a significant achievement for the nuclear medicine technology community. Prior to the existence of the NMTCB, technologists received certification from the ASCP (which has since merged with the NMTCB) and the American Association of Radiologic Technologists (AART). Ms. Pappas observes "that technologists felt that there should be a certification board run by nuclear medicine technologists." George Alexander (Past President 1979-1980 and former NMTCB chairman) recalls that "Virginia was very much in favor of this basic philosophy [for the development] of the NMTCB." Through the use of its "competency-based, criterion-referenced examination," certification by the NMTCB is highly respected.

Ms. Pappas also acknowledges deeper involvement with the chapters as an important factor in the outstanding results of the Section's Membership Campaign. By developing stronger liaisons within the chapters, the Section saw a 14 percent increase in membership. "I believe," she states, "that ties with the Chapters are important on the national level." To that end, she attends chapter meetings when time and budgetary considerations allow.

Of the various Section activities, Ms. Pappas believes that Nuclear Medicine Week (NMW) has definitely played a key factor in maintaining nuclear medicine identity. "It serves a purpose because it recognizes nuclear medicine as a separate specialty. It helps people in nuclear medicine achieve their own identity." Proposed by Maria Nagle, MS, CNMT in June 1984, NMW has had tremendous growth. According to Ms. Pappas, future plans include an international focus for NMW. "China," she notes, "is one of the countries requesting information and promotional ideas." Developing NMW here, however, obviously required a lot of hard work from the leadership and membership. Jim Wirrell, CNMT (Past President 1985-1986) reflects upon Ms. Pappas' contributions: "Virginia was the linch-pin. She was the one contact for the Section leadership during the bill's duration. She coordinated with and

accompanied the Government Relations Committee to D.C. She was instrumental in contacting key Washington people. I had a great amount of confidence in her ability to accept responsibility and follow through on tasks until they were completed."

Future Issues

During her years with the Section, Ms. Pappas notes that she has seen the Section and the technology mature. There are, however, issues that must be addressed in the future. She feels that job satisfaction and recruitment are definitely pressing issues facing the Section. She believes that "because the career life-span of a technologist is six years, more educational programs are needed to bring technologists into other areas of the industry." On the subject of recruitment, she observes that "schools are being closed because of DRGs. The applicant pool has decreased. The Section has to get an idea on what is happening by developing surveys and programs to find out what is needed and what it can do to help."

Moreover, she is enthusiastic about the continuing development of Nuclear Medicine Week and supports the idea of introducing nuclear medicine to high school and grammar students. She believes that there must be continued effort directed to the ways in which educational material is distributed throughout the membership. "The continuing education articles," she notes, "in the *JNMT* is an excellent format because the material is delivered directly." She is supported in this view by Mr. Wirrell who comments: "Educational programs have to be developed by the Section for technologists." Whether the issues

are licensure, multi-competency, or strategic planning on future trends, Ms. Pappas will continue to be in the right place to gather necessary information essential to the Section.

Administering the needs of an organization such as the Technologist Section requires excellent managerial and organizational skills in addition to other talents. In order to handle her demanding duties even more efficiently, Ms. Pappas has taken various courses that address the specific needs of association management. Recently, she was awarded the title, CAE, from the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). Receiving this certification is a significant accomplishment. Ms. Pappas attended classes that dealt with various areas in association management before taking an eight-hour exam composed of 16 sections on association management parameters and a case history. The examination is designed to determine association management competency. Ms. Pappas felt that the classes offered good background for anyone involved in this area of management even if they do not plan on taking the exam.

The old homily of the satisfaction gained from a job well done is, perhaps, the one that best explains Virginia Pappas' approach to her responsibilities at the Society. When reflecting upon her eight years as the Section Administrator, she remarks:

"Enjoying the work is the most important thing. When looking back it is important to say that it has been a good experience."

Eleanore Tapscott
Managing Editor, *JNMT*