

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY REVIEW OF THE TECHNOLOGIST SECTION

July 7, 1990 will mark the 20th anniversary of the Technologist Section. It seems appropriate to reminisce and look back to see how the section originated. Many people were involved in the formation of the Section, some of whom have been forgotten, as well as others who are active today. Perhaps the single most important person was Dr. Thomas P. Haynie, past editor of *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine*.

Creation of the Section

Initially, The Society of Nuclear Medicine's (SNM) membership was, as it is now, a hodgepodge of people with different backgrounds. Unlike the present, however, there were no section or councils for special interest groups to exchange ideas and work for common goals. Because of this lack of a forum, an organization known as the Society of Nuclear Medicine Technologists (SNMT) was formed by twelve technologists from the Chicago area in May 1965. This organization flourished and conducted successful scientific meetings. Despite this early success, it was implied that the SNMT was controlled not by technologists but by outside interests. This factor served as the impetus for the formation of the Section.

In August of 1966, a group of technologists in Houston organized an association under the presidency of Gary Woods. This group sought to associate itself with the SNM and approached Dr. Haynie for assistance. Dr. Haynie obliged, and along with other members of the Southwest Chapter, was instrumental in amending the chapter bylaws to include technologist activities.

At its midwinter meeting in December of 1966, the Board of Trustees approved the formation of the Committee on Technical Affiliates to be comprised of three subcommittees: the Subcommittee on Nuclear Medicine Technologist Training to the AMA Council on Medical Education; The Subcommittee on Continuing Education; and the Subcommittee on Technologist Affairs.

In June of 1967, Dr. Merrill Bender succeeded to the presidency of the Society and appointed Dr. Haynie to chair the newly formed Committee of Technical Affiliates because of his work with the technologists in the Southwest Chapter. Dr. Haynie asked Dr. Irvin Kaplan of Chicago to serve as chairman of the Subcommittee on Nuclear Medicine Technologist Training to the AMA Council on Medical Education. Dr. Kaplan agreed and should also be credited for authoring the first "Essentials for Nuclear Medicine Technologist Training Programs." In fact, Dr. Kaplan's subcommittee report to the Board of Trustees in January 1968 stated that the committee to establish these "Essentials" had been formed within the Council on Medical Education of the AMA, and that the representatives of the Society were Dr. William H. Beierwaltes of Ann Arbor, Michigan and Dr. Wil B. Nelp of Seattle, Washington.

Dr. Haynie asked Gary Woods, who had also been instrumental in technologist affairs in the Southwest Chapter, to serve as chairman of the Subcommittee of Technologist Affairs. To ensure that Gary not be a "committee of one," Dr. Haynie wrote to each chapter president asking that a technologist be appointed to represent the chapter on Gary's subcommittee. The responses were slow in coming, but on June 28, 1969, the Committee of Technologists, as it was then called, met in St. Louis, Missouri.

Mr. William K. Otte, Jr. and Mr. Ray W. Dielman made a short presentation on behalf of the SNMT in an effort to establish a liaison between the two organizations. (A few years later, the newly created Section discussed a merger with the SNMT. No agreement was reached and eventually the SNMT was dissolved.) The Committee made various proposals to the Board of Trustees, including a request for standing committee status. Incoming SNM President C. Craig Harris decided to combine the functions of the three subcom-

mittees into one special committee on technologists with Gary Woods as chairman, Barbara Jump as secretary, and Dr. Haynie as advisor.

On June 23, 1968, President Craig Harris, in his report to the Board of Trustees stated: "The experience of the past year, dealing with concerns of nuclear medicine technologists in several frames of reference, causes me to be increasingly persuaded that the interests of nuclear medicine technologists and their relationship to the field of nuclear medicine would be served by their having their own organization. I would propose that the organizational efforts at present embodied in sectional groups and in chapter technologist organizations be further extended to organizational efforts at the national level."

During the following year, the chapter representatives worked within their chapters to organize and were quite successful. They were so successful, in fact, that on June 4, 1969, Dr. Haynie wrote to President-elect Dr. George Taplin: "The time is approaching and may have arrived when it is desirable to set up a 'Technologist Section' with its own officers which would hold meetings coinciding with those of the society and its chapters, and be administered through our New York office. In my opinion, this would do much to clear the air and provide for rapid healthy growth in this segment of our membership." This was the first time that the term "technologist section" was used.

Gary Woods and Dr. Haynie worked diligently for the formation of a section during 1969. On President Taplin's suggestion, they prepared a constitution and bylaws for a section to be presented to the trustees at their forthcoming winter meeting in January 1970. Based on comments received from the trustees, the bylaws were revised and resubmitted. On July 7, 1970, the trustees approved the revised bylaws and the Section was born. President-elect Dr. Henry N. Wagner Jr. appointed officers. The Section now had a gargantuan budget of

\$1,000 and no identifiable members.

During the first year, Section Chairman James F. Cooper worked many long hours, enlisting the help of the chapters, restructuring the National Council, preparing press releases, and corresponding with just about anyone who had a question, comment, or complaint about nuclear medicine technology. The first business meeting of the Section took place June 28, 1971 in Los Angeles. Officers were elected after considerable heated debate. For their efforts on behalf of the Section, Dr. Haynie and Gary Woods were named distinguished honorees.

JNMT Established

The Section now had members it could identify and work was immediately undertaken to establish some means of communication. The first *Technologist Section Newsletter* was published in November 1971. After working out the details for publishing a journal with executive director Judy Glos, President Floyd Potes called Glenn Isserstedt and informed him that he was the editor and that he had three months to publish a journal. The rest is history. The *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology* has come a long way since then under the capable leadership of David L. Wells, Pat Weigand, Paul E. Christian, and current editor, Susan Weiss.

During the first 15 years of the Section's existence many other events of considerable significance took place. Verification of involvement in continuing education or VOICE (named by that master of acronyms, Glenn Isserstedt) and the nuclear medicine technology certification board (NMTCB), again named by Glenn, were established. The NMTCB probably evolved more out of frustration than anything else. Several years before the NMTCB came into existence, the Society and the Section favored a single certifying body for technologists. We have still not achieved that goal, but the NMTCB is alive and well

and is recognized as the official certifying agency by the nuclear medicine community.

Continued Advances in the Last Five Years

The last five years have been full of continued success for the Section. The Section's growth has given it the sophistication to tackle various complex issues. Communication between the Section and the Executive Committee and between the Section and the Board of Trustees has continually strengthened over the years. Substantial gains in establishing the Section as the leadership that represents technologists have been made. Significant progress has also been made in the establishment of comprehensive guidelines for nuclear medicine technology training programs. Major advances have occurred in state agencies to acknowledge the existence of the Section. Continuing education programs both nationally and at the grass-roots level continue to improve. The solid foundation and operating rules of the Section put in place by the charter members have served the Section well.

With escalating business costs over the past five years, the Section has done an excellent job in remaining solvent by containing costs without implementing significant cuts in member benefits or substantial increases in dues.

There has been an increase in the quality of Section publications. The *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology* continues to grow in quality as well as in popularity. The *Journal* and its editors have contributed immensely to the pride of the membership.

The Section has become more involved in governmental affairs and has done an excellent job serving as "watchdog" on legislative and regulatory activities that could have both short- and long-term effects on the profession.

Credit for these achievements must be given to the Section Presidents for their selection of committee chairmen and

members. Other major accomplishments include: establishment of a code of ethics; a congressional proclamation establishing Nuclear Medicine Week; publication of *Single-Photon Emission Computed Tomography: A Primer*, which is now one of the Section's best selling publications; obtaining government recognition to the importance of hospital-based nuclear medicine technology training program in allied health legislation (Title VII legislation).

In the midst of its many achievements, the Section was saddened by the loss of Paul Cole, CNMT in July 1988. Paul will be remembered for his contributions in the field of nuclear medicine technology and for his intuitive leadership qualities. In memory of Paul, a scholarship fund was established in his honor to provide financial assistance to nuclear medicine technology students.

The issues currently facing the Section have been complex. Those in the next decade will be equally challenging. The establishment of various committees has helped the Section to identify and nurture a new, younger group of technologists to ensure continued leadership. There is still plenty of work to be done, but we are confident that the Section will deal effectively with present and future issues. It has been a privilege to be part of this organization for the past 20 years. Congratulations and best wishes for the '90s. May we continue to grow together.

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