

## A 25th Anniversary Address

*Presented at the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Society of Nuclear Medicine, Minneapolis, Minnesota on June 12, 1995*

While it has been said that the longest journey begins with a single step, we are not usually reminded of the hard work and planning that goes into that first step. Twenty-five years ago, the Society of Nuclear Medicine began a journey that included the technologist members as an integral part of the society, along with physicians and scientists. That step, the creation of the Technologist Section, provided a forum for the discussion and development of the pragmatic issues of nuclear medicine. The how, rather than the why; the techniques and methods, rather than the research, development and clinical studies that characterized the meetings and publications of the society.

The hard work and planning began two years earlier in the Southwest Chapter, where such a forum was developed. It was such a success that the society's president, Dr. George Taplin, appointed a special committee to propose the model for the Technologist Section to the Board of Trustees.

I was privileged to be appointed chairman of that committee, which was composed of a technologist member representing each chapter of the society. Dr. Thomas Haynie was our mentor and guide through this process. Without his encouragement and sage advice, we might still be a committee. Many of the members of that committee went

on to distinguished service as leaders and officers of the Technologist Section.

The journey began at a time of great change in nuclear medicine. We were moving from

rectilinear scans, using radionuclides with half-lives ranging from days to weeks, to gamma camera images with a variety of technetium-labeled radiopharmaceuticals. Since there was no NIST standard for this radionuclide, we were not even sure of the size of a millicurie of technetium. The

journey has often been uncertain. We began to include dynamic images as part of the routine process of obtaining complete examinations. This was accomplished in the time it had previously taken for only a single view. It was even done without the aid of the computers upon which we now have become so dependent.

There have been many successes along this 25-year journey. The wisdom and faith of the SNM leadership regarding the technologists' ability to further the scientific and educational goals of the society have been well justified. The Technologist Section has provided the forum for the professional growth and education of its members through section meetings and the *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology*.

While it is great to celebrate this 25th anniversary of the Technologist Section and bask in its successes, the journey is not over. Many challenges remain, including the mandate to perform effective and meaningful diagnostic and therapeutic nuclear medicine procedures at minimized cost. Meanwhile, the overhead cost to fill out the paperwork required to prove the quality of the procedure and its compliance with the many regulatory requirements continues to increase.

If I had a telescope to see the journey ahead through the next 25 years, I am sure that I would see continued success and accomplishment for the Society of Nuclear Medicine and its Technologist Section. However, as I look through that telescope, all I see are three road signs. They read:

*Celebrate the past,  
Enjoy the present,  
Prepare for the future.*

***The Technologist Section has provided the forum for professional growth and education***