



The Pipette Line

Volume 35, Number 1
September, 2005

A Publication of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science-Georgia

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

View from the Desk of Dr. Hassan Aziz



It is with great enthusiasm that I write my first message as ASCLS-GA President. First, I wish to thank Past President Anne Ranne for her service as President. Also, my sincere thanks to all district directors, each of whom made important contributions. Special thanks go to Lester Pretlow, our trusty treasurer, and to Cathy Weaver and Bonnie Gum for their leadership roles in the society.

I would like to share with you my goals for this year. I recognize that during this year, things may happen that will alter the focus and the priorities of these goals, until that time, we shall remain focused on working towards achieving these goals.

- Promote the value of our society.
- Convince members and non-members that we gain strength by being one voice.
- Develop effective methods of communication between members and non-members and maintain and update the organization's website.
- Educate the public on clinical laboratory science
- Maintain financial stability
- Increase membership, i.e., focus on students, young professionals, and laboratory directors and managers.
- Correlate with other laboratory organizations in the state to better serve our profession.

Not to preach to the choir, I would like to remind everyone that it is vitally important that we continue to work together to address the concerns of our society. It is imperative that all of us do our part and join together. Too often we fail to take responsibility and assume others will take care of what needs to be done. I realize that not everyone can talk personally with our legislators or speak at public forums, but we all can support our united effort by joining and encouraging others to join. (continued, page 3)

Contents

Presidents Message	1
Student wins Award	2
Operation Awareness	3
CLBBTB News	4
Laboratory Medicine and Aging	5
Equivalent QC	6
Pictures from National	7

Officers and Directors

President, Hassan Aziz	H(912)921-5585 W(912)921-7442
President-Elect, Lisa Anderson	W(912)921-2348
Past President, Anne Ranne	H(770)513-0638 W(678)407-5536
Secretary, Bonnie Gum	H(706)884-2559 W(706)845-3180
Treasurer, Lester Pretlow	W(706)721-7631
District I, Barbara Russell	H(706)858-5006 W(706)721-3046
District II, Michelle Butina	W(912)921-5513
District III, Jill Dennis	H(299)377-9631 W(229)226-1653
District IV, E. Marshall Malon	W(478)633-7315
District V	Vacant
District VI	Catherine Ontko
District VII, Laura Stowers	H(678)546-3795 W(678)442-4503
District VIII, Mi Hui Scales	W(770)535-3553 x1406
District IX, Virginia Roberts	H(770)455-6408 W(404)297-9522
Student Forum Chair, Christine Bell	H(770)251-6937
Student Forum Advisor, Barabra Kraj	H(706)737-8227

Region III Director Lynn Ingram

2610 Lanrich Cove
Memphis, TN
lringram@utmem.edu

ASCLS President Bernie Bekken

bbekken@augustamed.com

Other email addresses may be found at
GSCLS website <http://www.asclsgeorgia.org>

The Pipette Line

Editor: *Bonnie Gum*

The Pipette Line is a quarterly Publication of the **American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science-Georgia** for its members.

Note: Copies of complete board minutes and committee reports are available to members on request from Bonnie Gum, ASCLS-GA secretary. Address all correspondence to

Pipette Line Editor
135 Huntington Drive
LaGrange, GA 30240

ASCLS Student Member Brings Awareness to the Profession

Article Submitted by Jill Dennis, ASCLS Georgia
District III Director

Lindsey Brown, CLT/MLT student at Southwest Georgia Technical College, is passionate about educating others regarding the profession of Clinical Laboratory Science. Lindsey was recently selected as the GOAL (Georgia Occupational Award of Leadership) winner representing SWGTC at the state level. She competed against other students from various majors. The GOAL award is given to a student showing outstanding leadership qualities and a high performance level in their field of study. Lindsey took the opportunity to educate judges, students, and other faculty about the important role clinical laboratory scientists play as part of the health care team. She is currently completing clinical rotations for the CLT/MLT degree at Phoebe



Dr. Richard Miller, Lindsey Brown and Mrs. Jill Dennis

New Student Officers

President:

Robert Childers
2123 Diggs Ave.
Savannah, Ga 31405
rlchild5@hotmail.com
Home: 912-232-2688
Cell: 334-202-2629

Vice President:

Jennifer LeFebvre
100 Prince Royal Ln. #1103
Savannah, Ga 31419
Jen_mt05@yahoo.com
912-481-1935

Secretary:

Mary Nelson
505 Harris Trail Rd. Apt. 2F
Richmond Hill, Ga 31324
Turtlegurl2001@hotmail.com
Home: 912-756-7463
Cell: 423-366-0967

Putney Memorial Hospital in Albany, GA and plans to continue her education by earning a bachelor's degree in Clinical Laboratory Science. Look for Lindsey to become a permanent active member of ASCLS.

President's message continued from page 1

Through our communication efforts and web site updates, we will continue to highlight the accomplishments we have achieved by working together. We need to keep open the dialogue of communication with our local and state legislators and press for changes that benefit our profession and, of course, our communities.

I encourage all of you to consider getting more involved in the society in some way: attend meetings, volunteer for a small job, write for the newsletter, or even run for office. I promise you that you will reap many more benefits than you know! (Hassan receiving his President's pin from Anne Ranne at right.)



More Student News

Operation Awareness

In conjunction with the Board members and District directors, the GA-ASCLS student forum is launching Operation Awareness. This project is focused on educating the public about our profession and recruiting new lab professionals. Jennifer LeFebvre and Mary Nelson, Student VP and Secretary, have developed a tri-fold brochure that will be distributed throughout the state. Some members have already planned to distribute these brochures to local high school guidance offices and healthcare-related classes. However, high school students are not the only audience being targeted. We want the general public to be aware of the laboratory tests that are performed, the professionals that perform them, and how the laboratory is organized. By placing the Operation Awareness brochures in physicians' offices and outpatient clinics, the public can have access to this information.

The brochure consists of an introduction to the Clinical Laboratory Science profession and the different laboratorians that work in the laboratory. The different sections of the laboratory are also described and examples are provided of tests and disease states that are specific to each.

We are asking that all GA-ASCLS members get involved with this project. Printed brochures are expected to be finalized soon and will be available for distribution throughout the state. Please stay tuned for more information!!

Thank you in advance for supporting Operation Awareness!!

ASCLS-GA Student Officers

News from the CLBTTB Advisory Committee

Joeline Dillard Davidson

The Clinical Laboratory, Blood Bank, and Tissue Bank Advisory Committee met July 14 at the DHR Central Laboratory on Clairmont Road.

The BROCC Report was given by Jeanie Arnold. HCS has made a recommendation to ORS management that the State laboratory program remain unchanged. We were successful in our efforts.

Jeannie Arnold reported that updated license certificates may be delayed but that surveys are up to date according to the schedule that has been established. The Department currently has three laboratory surveyor positions vacant. Jeannie Arnold stated that the Department is recruiting for these positions; however, travel and salaries seemed to be a deterrent. The Committee recommended that the Department try various recruitment and staffing techniques as an option.

Jeannie Arnold informed the Committee that expiration dates on the laboratories' license might change for those facilities that are state and CLIA licensed due to the requirement that CLIA laboratories be surveyed six months prior to expiration date. She also informed the Committee of the current criteria for risk of inspection are:

- Unacceptable proficiency test performance
- Key personnel changes (director, supervisor, management not familiar with GDHR rules and regulations)
- Validated complaints
- Major deficiencies
- Unsafe working environment

The members recommended additional options in order to maintain the state licensure program at its present status:

- Create part-time surveyor positions
- Award CAP and AABB deemed status
- Conduct alternate year surveys (no criteria)
- Perform a risk assessment to exempt laboratories from on-site survey

Jeannie Arnold informed the Committee that several of these options were already in place.

Legal counsel to GDHR advised the elimination of the "on call" provision of the Rules and Regulations. The new law (Senate Bill 51) negates the "on-call" provision. The legal counsel advised that "limited" testing could not be expanded to include other duties. Jeannie Arnold proposed a new classification system incorporating the old job classes and specifying the roles, responsibilities and supervision of each classification.

Joeline Davidson and Advisory Committee members presented a different approach by recommending five additions to the Rules and Regulations for technicians working independently (without supervision, according to the legal verbiage). Members voiced particular concern for unsupervised blood banking, gram stains and body fluid analyses and the process for supervisory review in a timely manner. The Advisory Committee suggested that current classification 5bl could work without supervision and meet specific qualifications, which should be added to the Rules and Regulations if certain criteria were met.. "On Call" would be eliminated.

The Advisory Committee and GDHR representatives agreed that GDHR would:

- Review the Committee's suggestions for revision of the personnel regulations
- Work on a revision of the personnel regulations in the Rules and Regulations for a technician working without supervision.
- Work on a draft proposal to present to the Committee by the September 8, 2005 meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee is September 8 at the Public Health Laboratory on Clairmont Road.

LABORATORY MEDICINE AND AGING: SELECTED TOPICS
J.A. KNIGHT, MD
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Submitted by Anne Ranne

Dr. Knight asked two pertinent questions:

1. Does the aging process affect laboratory test results such that we need separate reference intervals (normal values) for the elderly?
2. Many elderly have aberrant laboratory results. Is this age-related effects or to secondary phenomena?

The difficulty with evaluating laboratory test results in the elderly is related to several factors.

1. Multiple diseases/disorders
2. Subclinical diseases/disorders
3. Multiple drugs
4. Poor nutrition

Reference intervals for the elderly that were considered due to aging were later proven to be secondary to the subclinical disease or other problems. Dr. Knight feels that we must recognize that many common conceptions about aging are not due to aging but to secondary phenomena.

Magnesium, zinc, and selenium are essential to the immune system and maintain intracellular cation balance. In testing the magnesium level of 381 "healthy" elderly men and women (70 yrs old or older) 10% had decreased plasma magnesium levels and 20% had decreased RBC magnesium levels. Zinc deficiency was found in elderly patients experiencing: a) poor wound healing, b) T-cell deficiency, and c) anorexia. Selenium levels are commonly decreased in elderly people due to poor nutrition.

Hypocholesterolemia (less than 130 mg/dl) has been associated with increased risk of premature death. In a study of 224 elderly patients followed for 6 months found low cholesterol was found in hemorrhagic stroke events. About 10% of patients 65 years old or older developed hypocholesterolemia while in the hospital which increased length of stay, more complications, and possibly death. Low serum cholesterol has been seen with women and men aged 55-74 years of age experiencing depression.

Both hypo- and hyperthyroidism increases with age, especially in women. It is often suspected because the signs/symptoms may be mild or are unrecognized-merely a sign of "getting old" or the presense a mild psychiatric problem.

The two questions asked initially in the presentation remain unanswered. As our "baby boomer" population reaches the elderly age range, we may be able to resolve these issues.

EQUIVALENT QUALITY CONTROL POSITION PAPER ACCEPTED AT ASCLS NATIONAL CONFERENCE

In 2003 the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) introduced a program, Equivalent Quality Control (EQC), which was created to reduce the costs of external quality control by eliminating the number of QC data points produced during routine testing. There are three guidelines which can be used to adjust the QC protocols:

a. Alternative 1-Test Systems with internal/procedural control(s) that monitors the entire analytical process. New QC protocol: Test two levels of external control material **once per calendar month** after a successful evaluation which would consist of using the test system's internal control procedure(s) according to the manufacturer's instructions plus testing two levels of external material **daily for 10 consecutive days of testing.**

b. Alternative 2-Test Systems with internal/procedural control(s) that monitor a portion of the analytical process. New QC protocol: Test two levels of external control material **once per calendar week** after a successful evaluation which would consist of using the test system's internal control procedure(s) according to the manufacturer's instructions plus testing two levels of external material **daily for 30 consecutive days of testing.**

c. Alternative 3-Test Systems without internal/procedural control(s). New QC protocol: Test two levels of external control material once per calendar week after a successful evaluation which would consist of using the test system's internal control procedure(s) plus testing two levels of external material **daily for 60 consecutive days of testing.**

EQC offers no guidance as to how laboratorians would determine if the instrument's internal quality control was monitoring the "entire", a "portion" or none of the analytical process other than reliance on manufacturer's claims. EQC alternative #2 does not specify which portion of a test system being tested by an internal/procedural control qualifies the technology for this alternative. By increasing the interval between quality control tests, any undetected errors will affect the patient results and potentially the diagnosis and/or treatment.

ASCLS's POSITION

1. The clinical laboratory professionals who analyze clinical specimens and manage clinical laboratories have the legal and ethical responsibility for providing accurate and reliable patient test results not manufacturers.
2. The clinical laboratory professional should develop a system of quality assessment and management based on statistically sound method validations, calibrations and performance assessments.
3. Manufacturers and laboratory professionals should discuss policies and procedures, and formulate standards to identify failure points in test systems, internal quality control and labeling.
4. A quality system that incorporates manufacturer's recommendations on the use of external QC testing once the laboratory's professionals have determined that the accuracy and precision of the test system falls within the manufacturer's claims.

A vote in favor of accepting the ASCLS Position Paper was made at the national conference in Orlando, July 30, 2005.



Glen McDaniel and Anne Ranne at National Conference. Anne accepted the Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Award for Georgia. This award is given to the State Society contributing the most funds to CMN.

Students attending the Annual ASCLS conference held in Orlando, Florida in July.

From left to right: Dami Olowoyo, Tameika Campbell, Thomas Cullen, Jennifer Evans, Amber Cochran, Jennifer Plummer and Loretta Walker



National Recognition Awardees at ASCLS Conference

Lester Pretlow and Barbara Kraj, circled in blue are representing Georgia

TBA	2005	Expo for Health Careers, ASCLS Learning for Life Explorers Committee
March 2-4, 2006		Clinical Laboratory Educators Conference San Antonio, TX
July 25-29, 2006		ASCLS Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL



website <http://www.asclsgeorgia.org>

ASCLS - GA

135 Huntington Drive

LaGrange, GA 30240