



Corner

American Academy of Health Physics
American Board of Health Physics

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From the President:

MINNEAPOLIS MUSINGS: 1998

Ron Kathren, CHP, AAHP President

I would like to share with you some thoughts and ideas regarding the Minneapolis meeting. The Second Annual Academy Awards Luncheon was indeed a pleasure. We were pleased to host as honored guests about 12 of the newest "class" of Certified Health Physicists (CHPs) from the 1997 examination process among the 150 CHPs attending the luncheon. After a feast of that quintessential American dish of turkey (one time your President didn't have to eat crow!), Dale Denham was presented with the William McAdams Award for his outstanding contributions to the profession by American Board of Health Physics (ABHP) Vice-Chair Nancy Kirner. Mention was also made of the several Academy members who were honored by the Health Physics Society (HPS)—Frank Massé with the HPS Founders Award, Bruce Boecker with the Distinguished Scientific Achievement Award, and the eight Academy members among the 12 in the 1998 HPS Fellow class: Les Aldrich, Don Barber, Jack Beck, Jim Berger, Reg Gotchy, Roger Klopping, Ken Miller, and Paula Trinoskey. But the Awards Luncheon also contained a note of sadness, for the event included a moment of silence in memory of the four Academy members whose deaths I was made aware of during the year: Bob Augustine, Merrill Eisenbud, Wade Patterson, and Bob Wissink.

Immediately after the Awards Luncheon, Academy President-elect Herman Cember and I dashed from the Convention Center to the Hilton (missing, to our dismay, a portion of the excellent Academy technical session on Wingspread, so ably conceived and arranged by Past

President Jerry Martin) to the tail end of a meeting with the Presidents or representatives of other societies with a common interest in radiation safety, including the Conference on Radiation Control Program Directors (CRCPD), the Radiation Research Society (RRS), the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), and the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM). It was at this meeting that your President put forth the idea of creating a week-long National Radiation Safety Conference (HPS then President and now Past President Otto Raabe prefers "American" to "National"), cosponsored by a number of societies; certainly the American Academy of Health Physics (AAHP), HPS, CRCPD, National Registry of Radiation Protection Technologists, Campus RSOs, Association of Radon Scientists, RRS, and AAPM are all likely sponsors.

Possible benefits would likely accrue from a jointly sponsored National (or American) Radiation Safety Conference. The aggregation of a number of groups with the common interest of radiological safety certainly facilitates greater cross-fertilization among conference attendees and provides a much broader forum for those presenting papers. It would bring together organizations with common interests in the same location at the same time, permitting broader consideration of both scientific and political issues, and greatly facilitate joint actions. Clearly the enhanced inter-organizational communication would enhance our voice with our legislators. And, on a more pragmatic level, for some organizations such as the CRCPD, members would no longer have to attend or choose between two meetings, reducing costs and time and increasing the benefits derived from meeting attendance (e.g., ability to participate more broadly and attend a greater variety of technical presentations as well as the opportunity to interface with more colleagues).

There is, of course, a downside as well: who will take responsibility for the conference? How would resources, costs, and revenues be divided? Will the conference be too large, with too many competing sessions? To help resolve these and other questions, I have asked Frank Massé to work with the HPS and other organizations and to explore the feasibility of holding a jointly sponsored national conference. Frank, a charter member of the Academy and a Past President of HPS, has agreed to take on this formidable task; he is no stranger to evaluating new concepts and if he finds that the idea is feasible, will ensure that the AAHP will derive the full measure of any likely net benefit. And, HPS President (and AAHP member) Keith Dinger has appointed Frank as HPS liaison to the Academy, further facilitating and empowering Frank to proceed with what may well prove to be a watershed in radiation safety.

In closing these musings, let me say that in a future

“CHP Corner” I hope to discuss other issues of import such as academic accreditation and the mechanism of ethics complaints. And, as always, I invite input—questions, suggestions, constructive criticism, and, yes, even (and especially) pats on the back—from the Academy membership on any and all issues pertinent to the Academy. Emails are always responded to (although it may take a few days depending on my travel schedule and other factors); my email address is <rkathren@tricity.WSU.edu>.

Thanks for reading this whole item.

From the Board:

There were 153 Part I examinations and 160 Part II examinations proctored at 20 sites this year. Special thanks to all the CHP colleagues who volunteered their time to provide this opportunity at so many locations across the country and around the world. The Academy Executive Committee, also meeting in conjunction with the HPS Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, endorsed a Board initiative recommending retention of a testing process consultant to update the Part II exam with, hopefully, the result of greater consistency in average candidate performance from year to year and better examination specifications.

In closing, George Vargo has indicated that he may have omitted the Part I Examination Panel in his efforts to express appreciation in the last “CHP Corner.” No slight to any of the many contributors to ABHP operations was intended. George reports an interesting experience in visiting Chernobyl with Vice President Gore’s party, so we hope he will write something politically controversial for a future “CHP Corner.”

From the Continuing Education Committee:

Les Aldrich’s committee organized several continuing education offerings that were well received at the Minneapolis meeting. Total attendance in the three courses was 160, of which 74 were in the Decontamination and Decommissioning (D&D) course. Thanks go to Sydney Porter, who selected the subjects and speakers, Nancy Johnson, who spent considerable time preparing course materials, and the other members of the Secretariat staff who handled sign-in and material distribution on site. The smallest class turned in 64 percent of the course evaluation sheets, the medium class turned in 88 percent, and the D&D class turned in only 32 percent. If you are among the two-thirds of the D&D course who did not complete the evaluation sheet, please dig it out now and send it to Les.

The Continuing Education Committee has also received a suggestion that the Academy sponsor an OSHA eight-hour

refresher course next summer. With a lot of health physicists adding industrial safety and industrial health to their competencies, it seems like a reasonable idea; the committee needs your help with an informal poll: If a health physicist (certified or otherwise) would attend the course if held at the next annual meeting, send Les an email to that effect at <laldrich@gte.net>.

From the Treasurer:

In the August “CHP Corner,” the Finance Committee provided a pie chart illustrating the various sources of income for the Academy. As promised, here is the equivalent graphic for Academy expenses on the basis of the budget submitted for approval of the Executive Committee at its recent meeting in Minneapolis. The administrative expenses shown on the graph are also obligated by the Secretariat, but have been separated from the baseline staff and contract costs in the illustration. Although the budget approved is a deficit budget, the Academy remains financially healthy. The deficit consists primarily of the costs potentially associated with Board initiatives to enhance the consistency of the Part II examination and thus constitutes a prudent long-range investment in the Academy.

BUDGETED AAHP EXPENSES: '98-'99

