

Chapter News

North Central Chapter

Shari C. Mask, RRPT, and Michael A. Lewandowski, CHP



Fall Technical Meeting

Macalester College hosted the North Central Chapter of the Health Physics Society (NCCHPS) fall technical meeting on 25 October 2013 in St. Paul, Minnesota. The meeting was run by NCCHPS President-elect Gary Yarrow and included a technical program, a business meeting, and a vendor exhibit by Tom Chwierut from Mirion Technologies.

The technical program consisted of five presentations. Bill Janssen, from Laser & Electro Optic Technology and acting laser safety officer at the Hennepin County Medical Center, presented "Laser Safety in the Workplace." Laser safety responsibilities often fall on the radiation safety officer (RSO) or environment, health, and safety staff. Bill discussed many tools to aid laser safety officers



Victor Goretsky (left) and Sam Hays

in their duties. He reviewed the numerous groups that show interest in laser safety regulations and recommended being familiar with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) publication Z136, "Safe Use of Lasers." ANSI Z136 is often referenced by the Joint Commission and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration during audits.

Victor Goretsky and Sam Hays, from the University of Wisconsin (UW)-Madison, reviewed an incident resulting from the cremation of a deceased person who was implanted with an ^{125}I lung mesh implant at the UW hospital a few days prior to death. Detectable contamination was found inside the crematory retort. The regulatory report was picked up by a blogger who posted the event, with the title "ALERT! Radioactive I-125 Corpse Vapors Possibly Contaminate McDonald's Food Distribution Hub." The UW-Madison Radiation Safety Office elected to assist the funeral home in decontamination of the crematory. Decontamination required an amendment to the UW license. The crematory was decontaminated to near background levels. The blog's YouTube video was later debunked by other online forums.



HPS President-elect Barbara Hamrick

Barbara Hamrick, CHP, JD, president-elect of the HPS and RSO of the University of California-Irvine Medical Center, presented the North Central Chapter's Wissink Memorial Lecture. The lectureship honors the contributions made to the North Central Chapter and the HPS by NCCHPS founding member Robert Wissink. Barbara delivered an insightful presentation, "Things I Don't Know About Epidemiology." Barbara reminded us of the importance of statistical significance when reviewing data and showed how even randomly generated numbers forced in a linear regression through the origin result in a positive slope 94 percent of the time.



Gordon Tannahill (left) passes the presidential baton to Gary Yarrow.

The preparation for, and response to, radiological disasters was discussed during two presentations. Cullen Case, senior manager of emergency preparedness with the National Marrow Donor Program and program manager of the Radiation Injury Treatment Network, brought to the foreground the realistic response and overburdening of resources that could quickly result after a radiological mass casualty incident. Sherrie Flaherty, radioactive material program supervisor at the Minnesota Department of Health, reviewed the status of the Minnesota Radiation Emergency Volunteers organization. The

group was organized less than a year and a half ago to provide technical assistance to individuals responding to a radiological release from one of Minnesota's commercial nuclear generating plants.

During the business meeting, outgoing NCCHPS President Gordon Tannahill discussed the state of the chapter and passed the baton to incoming President Gary Yarrow. Gary is the environmental health and safety director at South Dakota State University. Congratulations to the additional incoming chapter officers, President-elect Glenn Sturchio, Secretary/Treasurer Mike Lewandowski, and Councilors Victor Goretsky and Barb Hodge.

North Carolina Chapter

Mark D. Pflug, *President-elect*



The fall 2013 meeting of the North Carolina Chapter of the Health Physics Society (NCHPS) was held in Concord, North Carolina, at the Great Wolf Lodge Conference and Meeting Center, 24–25 October. There were over 60 attendees and 11 vendors at the meeting. The Thursday morning professional enrichment course, "Radiation Protection in Clinical Radionuclide Therapy: A Physician's Perspective," was presented by Dr. Robert Reiman (Duke University). The course has been approved by the American Board of Health Physics and the American Society of Radiologic Technologists for 4.0 and 3.75 continuing education credits, respectively.

The chapter was grateful for the visit from HPS President-elect Barbara Hamrick, CHP, JD. Hamrick shared her experience as a radiation safety officer with her talk "Things I Don't Know About Epidemiology." She has been quite busy visiting all the chapters and we appreciate her taking the time to come to North Carolina.



Left to right: Mark Pflug (president-elect NCHPS), Dr. John Till, Jonathan Moore (president NCHPS), and Wendy Woehr (past president NCHPS)

Following Hamrick, Nellie Kelty (Algeta) talked about a new alpha-emitting ^{223}Ra drug recently approved by the Food and Drug Administration for cancer-patient therapy. The meeting also featured talks from Sergeant First Class Jerry W. Spencer (North Carolina Army National Guard) and from Cathy Ribaud (National Institutes of Health) regarding conditions of readiness and resources available at the state and federal levels. The dinner speaker on Thursday evening, Dr. John Till (Risk Assessment Corporation), gave an excellent presentation titled "Dosimetry for Atomic Veterans—A Component of the Million Worker Radiation Study" (see [Boice Report #6](#) in the May 2013 issue of *Health Physics News*).

Larry Haynes and Bob Beckham (Duke Energy Corporation) spoke to the attendees about dose assessments for contaminated wounds and challenges with Fukushima Daiichi, respectively. Sandra Szendy (Duke University) gave the talk "Optimizing Personal Dosimetry at Duke University Medical Center." The chapter also listened to Jennifer Dorand (PhD candidate at Wake Forest University) speaking about her work with mobile beta irradiation devices and the assessment of cutaneous radiation injuries.

John McCormick (Bionomics, Inc.) gave the group an update regarding the current Source Collection and Threat Reduction Program. The chapter also heard from W. Lee Cox III and James Albright, representatives of the North Carolina Radiation Protection Section, on new web-based licensing and other state business. Rounding out our list of speakers was Dr. Mark Smith (Ionaktis, LLC), who gave the enlightening talk "Principles of Industrial Radiation Processing."

On a somber note, Bill DeForest (ProPhysics) spoke about the passing of Joseph "Marion" Eaddy III. Marion was a staunch supporter of the chapter and will be missed!