



The Sentinel

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The North Carolina Cancer Sentinel

May/June 2000

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The Sentinel

The North Carolina Cancer Sentinel is a publication of the Association of North Carolina Cancer Registrars. The Sentinel is published six times per year. Annual subscriptions are included in membership dues of ANCCR members. Subscriptions are available to non-members at a cost of \$12 per year.

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NCRA Annual Meeting Report - Elizabeth Mullis, RHIT, CTR

Education is Knowledge - Theme
NCRA 26th Annual Educational Conference
May 9-13, 2000
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Starting my trip by air out of Greensboro was an experience. After we had boarded the airplane, the first words I heard from the pilot were “we are experiencing some trouble with one of the flaps but rather than to delay we are going onto Dallas and they can work on it there”. There was nothing but complete silence. It was as if everyone was thinking the same thing- “will we make it to Dallas?” Well, things did get back to normal, and we were off to Dallas and made it without incidence, thank God.

The flight to Albuquerque was nice. I saw many different terrains from the air. The climate is “high desert” which means warm days, cool nights (34 degrees one morning) and beautiful sunsets. We were advised ahead of time to drink plenty of water due to the high altitude and low humidity. We certainly did need it. The panoramic view consisted of desert floor, canyons, and mountains. Sandia Peak-Tramway and restaurant were a special attraction for and probably the most popular. Old historic Albuquerque and Route 66 were some of the popular sites to visit. There were many fine jewelry shops, crafts, and art galleries, and of course dining. There were approximately 800 people attending the meeting all seemed to enjoy Albuquerque.

The opening ceremonies began on Tuesday with an overview of what was expected for the remainder of the week from our hosts -the Program Committee. The Special Interest Groups were divided into daily sessions so that all could attend the session of their choice. Such choices were: Cancer program managers, different types of registries and registry services. Concurrent sessions included: data usage tracking, clinical trials, registry operations and quality of care. (continued on page 2)

ANCCR Executive Board

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828-879-7685

n

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828-324-3131

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Secretary

Pam Cline

n

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Melanie Rogan
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336-716-3223

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910-343-7065

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Rex Healthcare

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336-718-0270

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919-849-9297

n

NCRA Liaison

Inez Evans
336-716-3223

n

CCR Liaison

Carol Dickinson
919-715-4564

(NCRA Meeting cont.)

As I attended the Eastern Regional Breakfast I later reflected back to realize how much the members of NC give to the fight against cancer locally and nationwide. We have so many people in NC working for the cause in one way or another. I would like to thank the following people for their giving to serve others: Linda Mulvihill, CTR - Pres. Elect; Inez Evans, CTR (past Eastern Regional Director) and current Chair of Membership with Melanie Rogan and Gloria Regan as members; Carol Dickinson, CTR-Chair of Nominating; Judy Robertson, CTR will serve as a Reviewer for the *Journal of Registry Management* and Debra Witzler-Purdy, CTR-By Laws Committee member. I was very proud to talk about ANCCR's educational goals and accomplishments. As your President the networking was absolutely fantastic with others states, and I am already seeing results of that effort by receiving calls from other states wanting to know how we are so successful in our endeavors. What an excellent compliment for NC registrars to receive.

ANCCR Executive Board Meeting Update

We had an exceptional good "working" Board Meeting on Thursday, June 8th by teleconference. Our Spring Meeting showed a significant profit. Thanks for a job well done to our hosts in Burlington. Ways and Means will be selling ANCCR t-shirts at the Fall Meeting. We will have the Training Workshop for new registrars in Asheville in July.

Membership reported that we have 108 members. Encourage others to join ANCCR. Cathy Rimmer, the Publications Chair, will be giving up her duties within the next few months. Cathy has done so much for and with *The Sentinel* in the past years we owe her a great deal of thanks. If there is someone interested in this position the Board would like to know. There is a lot of decisions that need to be made within the next few months so we need your help.

The Nominating Committee presented the slate of candidates for election at the fall meeting. The candidate profile and absentee ballots will be mailed in July with the next newsletter.

The A4C's Committee Liaison reported that a bill has been presented to the NC legislature for insurance coverage of clinical trials. The federal government has passed a bill for Medicare to pay for clinical trials.

Dr. Peter Turk, Chairman of the NC Cancer ACoS Liaison Program, will be writing articles periodically for *The Sentinel*. The Triad Meeting of the Southeast Region of the American Cancer Society will be held in Atlanta, July 12-13, and will be jointly sponsored by American Cancer Society and the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer. I will represent the registrars in NC at this meeting as a guest of the ACS and ACoS. I will do a follow up of this meeting in a later issue.

(continued on page 7)

Central Cancer Registry Update - Dale Herman, Director

Transition is the name of the game at the Central Cancer Registry. During the past year we have undergone major changes in personnel and we are about to change our data management system. In spite of all of the changes, the CCR did succeed in getting its first ever certification for complete, high quality, timely data from the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries. Although we would like to be able to take the credit for this, much of the credit goes to all of you. The vast majority of our data come from hospital registries, so this is as much your award as it is ours. Thank you for your part in this.

Personnel changes are always difficult, partly because we lose valuable experience whenever a person leaves, but also because we tire of saying "good-bye". The most recent "good-bye" was said to Amy Cox. We all have the greatest admiration and respect for Amy and we hope that she will enjoy her new job at Quintiles. By the time you read this, we should have a new person in Amy's position, but I cannot tell you who that person will be as I write. However, I can tell you that we have two new statisticians working at the CCR. Mr. Sohrab Ali began on June 1. He is working with the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program. Ms. Deirdre Rogers began on June 19. She is working with the data management group. CDC has approved five new positions, which will begin as soon as we can get the paperwork finished. These

are a quality assurance position, a case ascertainment specialist, a death clearance assistant and two statisticians.

The other major transition is to the new software system. C/NET quit supporting its central data management software which has forced us to make this change. They continue supporting their data entry software and will be introducing a new windows-based data entry product later this summer. We have signed a contract with ScottsHill to provide us with data management software. Their system is currently being used by Washington and North Dakota and is built on MS Access. We will spend the month of July testing and fine tuning it, and it will be installed the first week of August. Because of the failure of C/NET, we have a large backlog of data to load. Most of the statistical staff will be working on that through the end of the year to try to get caught up.

We are in the process of doing some strategic planning, trying to envision what it is that we want to look like in five years. If it looks feasible, we will use this information to apply for funding under the SEER program. Even if we do not get SEER funding, this document will be useful in setting our course for the foreseeable future. We have nearly 95% complete case ascertainment, but the last five percent are always the hardest to find. In order to get to where we want to be with case ascertainment while maintaining high quality standards,

we will need about twice the staff that we now have. That is a tall order and how to achieve that for the CCR while helping you maintain the staffing level you need is the challenge. We need to work together on attracting good people to the profession, training them and keeping them. The health of the people of North Carolina depends on it.

Candidates for Office

President

Teresa Jarrett
Elizabeth Tucker

Vice-President

Carol Burke
Deborah Carrethers

Secretary

Donna Calicutt
Sheila Walker

Treasurer

Bobbie Herring
Melanie Rogan

Candidate profiles and absentee ballots will be included with the next newsletter. If you have questions, contact Blanche Sellars, Nominating Chair.

Staff Change

Blanche Sellars has retired from Durham Regional Medical Center as registrar. But Blanche is not leaving the profession! She will be working as a cancer registrar at Rex Hospital in Raleigh.

New Sentinel Editor Needed for Fall

The ANCCR Board has decided to divide the work previously assigned to the Publications Chair. A new chair is needed for the new year which starts after the Fall Meeting in September. The primary responsibility will be to produce the newsletter *The Sentinel* 6 times per year. Cathy Rimmer will continue to work on the web site as a separate responsibility from the Publications Chair.

Technical qualifications:

1. Need experience producing newsletters or similar desktop publishing publications.
2. Access to desktop publishing software that can convert files to HTML format.
3. Access to a laser printer that prints at least 600 dpi resolution.
4. Access to Internet/Email

There is an opportunity for newer members or older members who've been hiding their skills to be involved in ANCCR and give a new look to the newsletter.

If you have an interest, please contact ANCCR President Elizabeth Mullis as soon as possible. We would like to have this person transition with the outgoing editor before September so there would be continuity of the publications.

CTR Examination Schedule

Examination Date

September 16, 2000
March 10, 2001
September 15, 2001

Application Deadline

August 1, 2000
February 1, 2001
August 1, 2001

ANCCR Fall Meeting September 6-7, 2000

**Four Points
Sheraton Hotel
Crabtree Valley Mall Area**

Raleigh, NC

For More Information Contact:

Carol Dickinson
Central Cancer Registry
carol.dickinson@ncmail.net
919-715-4564

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ANCCR Spring Meeting

April 5-6, 2001

Asheville, NC

For More Information Contact:

Melissa Pearson
Mission/St. Joseph's Cancer Registry
509 Biltmore Ave.
Asheville, NC 28801
828-213-0150
msj.camop@memo.msj.org

ANCCR Fall Meeting 2001

Winston-Salem, NC

For More Information Contact:

Inez Evans
WFU Baptist Medical Center
Cancer Registry
Medical Center Blvd.
Winston-Salem, NC 27157
336-716-3223
ievans@wfubmc.edu

This will be our first 3 day meeting
The next meeting will be in 2002.

(Executive Board cont.)

The Central Registry informed the Board that the final plans, testing and converting of data are being done. In the mean time, the CCR can review the present data, but unfortunately not make any corrections or changes. Please note that Wendy Demark-Wahnefried or Denise Snyder may contact you for information regarding a study entitled "Life after Cancer, Breast and Prostate Patients over the age of 65". Jennifer Gierisch may contact you regarding a clinical trial project to educate the non-physician population and the importance of clinical trials.

The Spring Meeting in Asheville is progressing. Melissa Pearson is the contact. Inez Evans reported on the progress if the Fall Meeting 2001. A working list of speakers and topics has been prepared.

Commission of Cancer Update - Dr. Peter Turk, State Liaison Chair Meeting April 28, 2000

1. By the year 2002, an anatomic pathology standardization checklist system will be in place nationally. This system, spearheaded by the COC and College of American Pathologists, will mandate recording of tumor size, grade, lymphovascular invasion, etc. assisting in TNM staging and increasing information regarding each tumor. This should help alot in your completion of the staging forms.
2. One of the most common deficiencies in the approvals process for hospitals by the COC is the lack of representation of cancer specialists- most commonly general surgeons- at the tumor board meetings. In this increasingly busy medical world, there needs to be a process in place in each institution to ensure the medical oncologic and surgical input into these conferences.
3. The COC is well aware of the financial constraints of hospitals today, and new standards and requirements hopefully will not produce any further cost to remaining accredited hospitals.

Triad Activity

A Triad Meeting for Southeast Region of the American Cancer Society is scheduled for July. This program, involving the ACS, the state cancer registrars associations, and the cancer liaison program, is being initiated nationally as a partnership that includes coordinated efforts toward data improvement, the development of data-driven cancer control plans, the coordination of state and local resources in the development of the planning efforts, and finally, implementation of the plans.

Cancer Liaison Physician Performance Report Data

These forms should have been sent to you for completion regarding the function and input of the cancer liaison physician in your hospital. If you have not received a form, or have any problems in filling it out, please contact me: phone (704) 377-3900, or e-mail psturk@aol.com.

New Certified Tumor Registrars - March 2000

The following people passed the CTR exam in March 2000:

- Donna Calicutt
- April Delacruz
- Carla King *
- Kelly Lowrance
- Cynthia Moore
- Mary Phelps
- Leta Vess

**Carla King was left off by mistake in the March/April publication and we apologize for the oversight.*

Forsyth Medical Center Cancer Registry Phone Number Changes

Effective June 14, 2000
Area Code (336)

Staff	Phone
Cathy Rimmer	718-0270
Deborah Carrethers	718-0346
Vickie Gill	718-0242
Veta Griffin	718-0245
Kathy McCoy	718-0354
Nancy Pickering	718-0257

Fax 718-0241

These telephone numbers will be in effect for approximately one year. The staff has relocated outside of Forsyth Medical Center due to Cancer Center construction. The staff will move into their new quarters in the Cancer Center during the summer of 2001.

The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Association of North Cancer Registrars

Cathy Rimmer, Editor

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To:

Address Correction Requested