

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: CINDY RICE, HT (ASCP)

Dear Colleagues:

You may have noticed that this President's Message is not being authored by Scott Gunther. The ASMH Executive Committee has asked me, Cindy Rice to fill-in for Scott as President and leave my position as ASMH Vice-President.

It is my hope that in this time leading up to the ASMH Annual Meeting in my hometown of Atlanta, GA that we can work towards bringing more value to your membership. In order to accomplish this, we do need to hear from you and for you to participate in the activities of the organization. Coming-up this year for ASMH members are the 2005 Salary Survey, ASMH Officer and Director Elections, 11th Annual Meeting, a Call for Papers for the 2005 Abstract Award and more.

Several of our members have already applied for the ACMMSO Histotech Quality Assurance Training Initiative and others have volunteered their time and expertise to work with Dr. Frederick Fish on the Manual Committee. As you can see, it is an exciting time to be a Mohs histotech and a member of the ASMH!

Sincerely,



Cindy Rice, President

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Kimberly Brock, HT

Greetings fellow techs.

I hope this newsletter finds you thinking of the warmer weather ahead. I am an avid gardener and am cruising the seed and flower catalogs planning and dreaming of what I will be hopefully enjoying in a few months. I would like to take this time to encourage you to do a little planning of your own. This is your newsletter and we would like it to reflect **your** interests and experiences. In each issue we would like to feature an article by a surgeon, an article by a technician, and a profile on one of our members. Finding people to volunteer a small amount of time to this effort has already proven challenging. I know willing people are out there waiting to be asked. I know that you have ideas of what you would like to read about and questions you would like answered. **This is your formal invitation to contribute.** Please let me or

David Feldner know if you might be willing to be profiled or write an article. The article does not need to be long or scientific and can be done over time and submitted for a future issue. A simple description of your daily tasks, how you solved a problem, or how you relate to your colleagues would be wonderful. (We'll even help you with the editing.) If you know someone who would make an interesting personality profile, we'll ask them for you. Just let us know who it is. Try to talk your surgeon into submitting a short article on some aspect of Mohs surgery. Did they present something at the Dr.'s meeting that interested you? Most presentations can be very easily adapted into an article. I hope I sparked some ideas. Jot them down and contact us – ASMH wants **you!**




ASMH
11th Annual Meeting

October 28-29, 2005 • Atlanta, Georgia



S a v e t h e D a t e

HISTOTECH NEWS

 HISTOTECH

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ASMH

A NEW SURGERY CENTER - NEW INSIGHTS

David R. Byrd, MD

This is an exciting time for our office, Rochester Skin Cancer Center, as we embark on a new adventure. Our practice has grown and it has become apparent that we must expand. Upon evaluating our needs, we have decided to build an accredited surgical facility. Although tedious and time consuming, we feel that the positive will by far outweigh the negative.



Given the additional requirements necessary for accreditation and with our increased case volume and staff growth, we have implemented various new policies to better serve our patients. "Quality Assurance" has now become a priority in every area of our office. This awareness allows us to target concerns and make appropriate changes before they become a problem. We document all of these concerns, make the appropriate changes and follow up to be certain the concern or problem is resolved. Sometimes it is the smallest issues in the lab or office that can make the biggest difference. Much documentation is done in a log form.

We have found it essential to have monthly staff meetings. This is not new to many of your offices, but I am sure that as busy as we get these important times are often neglected. I have a nurse that keeps a pad in her pocket and every day if any issue of concern comes up it gets written down so it can be addressed at the next meeting. A written assessment of previous concerns as well as new issues is printed, reviewed and a report generated as to what and why changes were made. With this effort we feel we are increasing efficiency and improving our quality of care to the patients.

Procedure manuals have helped educating new employees. Every procedure from surgery, lab, front office, laundry etc. is in the manual and allows an employee to learn or refresh their memory concerning any task in the office. It also allows for continuity in everything that is done. Everyone does everything the same way and it leaves no excuse for lack of education. We have three Mohs technicians and to maintain communication, proper record keeping, and efficiency between the lab and floor, these manuals have become very helpful.

As a physician it is easy to focus on my role and performance as a surgeon and this new endeavor has challenged me to increase my leadership role in many new areas. Quality assurance is essential to a successful practice and we could all be challenged to work harder to improve patient care and efficiency of our perspective practices.

About the Author: David R. Byrd is the director of Dermatologic Surgery at Rochester Skin Cancer Center in Rochester Hills, Michigan. He earned his medical doctorate at Wayne State University School of Medicine. Dr. Byrd did his residency training in dermatology as well as his fellowship training in Mohs Micrographic Surgery and Dermatologic Surgery at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. His interests include cutaneous oncology and facial reconstructive surgery.

Advertise in the ASMH Newsletter!

The ASMH Newsletter is printed quarterly for distribution to Mohs histotechnicians and surgeons.

Each issue is also posted online as a PDF file at <http://www.mohscollege.org/ASMH.htm>

Go to this page or contact **David Feldner at (414) 347-1103** for the advertising schedule and rates.

NEW ASMH MEMBERS

Welcome to the recently accepted members of the American Society for Mohs Histotechnology:

Dian K. Adkins, Fort Wayne, IN

Norma L. Anderson, HT, Seattle, WA

Dalia Fahreddine, Danbury, CT

Heather Kinney, Fort Wayne, IN

Melissa A. McCormack, CMA, Eugene, OR

Galena Oberemok, Hemet, CA

Robin D. Parker, Baton Rouge, LA

Carrie Duff Rivenbark, Wilmington, NC

Jansen R. Tsakos, HT, Clinton Township, MI

T. Keith Waldrop, Marietta, GA

XunWei Wang, Boston, MA

Gerald W. Wiley, CMA, Eugene, OR

Welcome!

ASMH 2005 MEMBERSHIP DUES

ASMH members receive valuable benefits throughout the year with their memberships. Some of the benefits available only to members include:

1. A subscription to the quarterly *ASMH Newsletter*
2. Eligible for reduced registration fees to the ASMH Annual Meeting (\$175 versus \$475 for non-members), which will be held October 28-29, 2005 in Atlanta, GA
3. Participation in the 2005 Histotech Salary Survey
4. ACCMSCO Histotech Quality Assurance Training Initiative
5. ASMH Officer and Director Elections
6. Speaking, Moderating and Workshop opportunities at the Annual Meeting

If you have any questions on your membership status, please contact the ASMH office at (414) 347-1103.

TIPS FOR DIFFICULT CASES

Roberta Arbaugh & Amy Reed

Difficult cases can be defined differently by each tech. Everyone has a specific system for doing their job. Most have developed their own way of doing things. Here are some things to think about when dealing with difficult cases.

If the flow of the laboratory is smooth and purposeful things have a tendency to work smoothly. Most tech's don't have the luxury of being in on the planning of a Moh's laboratory. But if the flow of the lab is off, that can create a potential for many errors.

Tried and true labeling systems are a must in order to prevent an error. Most tech's have their own labeling systems. Here are some simple examples. Take a laboratory marker and just write directly on the block, or write on the back of the chuck. Take a clear plastic slide protector, cut it in 5 cm square pieces. Punch a hole in the center, take a china marker and write the number so it can be read. Slip it over the chuck stem.

Multiple cases are a way of life in the lab. Some cases come in with one site, others have multiple sites. Prioritizing cases is a must. When cases come in with more than one site, try to alternate them between single site cases. This will ensure that every case is finished in a timely manor.

Embedding techniques can either make or break a high quality slide. There are machines that can automatically embed. All the tissue edges are on the same plane with this method and it is user friendly. You can use your cryostat to embed, liquid nitrogen and a Miami Special, a Cryo-cup system.

Cutting fat is one of many problems that can occur in a Moh's laboratory. Make sure that the tissue is completely frozen. Cut some sections thicker to start with and then cut on your normal micron setting. Depending on the piece, you may have to cut the section faster or slower than normal. Also if you are having difficulty with your roll plate don't use it. Cartilage is best handled with a new blade and positively charged slides. If your blade is sharp, the cartilage will cut fine, sometimes the tissue around it will want to chip out. Add more OCT to help reinforce, then cut slowly back into the block. Due to the cartilage these sections may be very uneven. If this starts to occur change your blade and start again.

Preventing chips from occurring can be impossible. Sections that are small or from the scalp, back, chest, hands and feet are more prominent for chipping. When your tissue starts to chip, try to slow down your cutting and warm your block up. This helps most of the time.

Being a member of the ASMH is one of best problem solving skills your can have. The list of tech's given out in the packet every year is a list of problem solvers that can help you. Take advantage of the tech's that are within your reach.

If you get into a case and are having an extremely difficult time with producing a quality slide, remember to breathe, take your time and you will produce a quality slide.

About the Authors: Roberta Arbaugh was trained at the Ohio State Univerisity School of Histotechnology and is HT ASCP board-certified. She has worked for more than 20 years in the field of Mohs.

Amy Reed resides in Indianapolis, Indiana where for the past 7 years she has been the Moh's technician at Laser and Skin Surgery Center of Indiana.

CALLING ALL MEMBERS!

The ASMH is your membership organization. It wouldn't survive without the volunteer effort of a small sampling of members that have helped develop the organization over the years. Now is the time for you to become involved and help grow the organization.

Opportunities for your volunteer time include the following: Membership Committee, Annual Meeting Program Committee, Networking Committee, Communications Committee, Bylaws Committee, Annual Meeting Speaker and Member of the Board of Directors (nomination form included in this issue).

Please contact David Feldner at (414) 347-1103 or dfeldner@execinc.com to learn more about become a volunteer to the ASMH.

TOP 10 LIST

"Reasons to be a Member of the ASMH"

10. Volunteer opportunities including the ASMH Board of Directors, Program Committee, Bylaws Committee, Program Chair, Session Moderator, etc.
9. Networking with industry vendors in the exhibit hall to learn more about the latest technology, products and services in the industry.
8. Opportunity to apply to become a trainer in the ACMMSO Histotech Quality Assurance Training Initiative.
7. Free subscription to the *ASMH Newsletter*.
6. Speaking opportunities at the Annual Meeting to share your knowledge and hone your speaking skills.
5. Opportunities to write articles in the *ASMH Newsletter* that are viewed by histotechs and Mohs surgeons alike.
4. Learning from leading Mohs surgeons on updates in Mohs surgery.
3. Networking with your peers and friends in histotechnology.
2. The chance to get to know your surgeon better by traveling together to the annual meeting.
1. Where else but at the ASMH Annual Meeting can you take skin samples from a pig right after continental breakfast?

MEMBER PROFILE

Barbara Beck, HT (ASCP)

1. Why did you choose histotechnology as a career path? During high school a good friend worked in the morgue on weekends. (Her mother was the histology supervisor at a local hospital) One weekend she had to work an airplane crash and asked if I wanted to help. Well, that opened a door! I was hooked. I went on to get my degree and board certification in Histopathology. After working in the pathology department for 14 years, our 3 boys were getting older, we wanted to spend more time with them during middle school, and a local surgeon was starting in mohs. I switched to mohs micrographic surgery and enjoyed the patient contact.



2. Outside of histotechnology and Mohs surgery, what activities consume your time?

My husband of 33 years has retired from law enforcement, and we live in the mountains of North Carolina. We do get to travel quite a bit, as we have started a consulting business, with full training and, the set up of mohs labs around the country. We enjoy visiting our children, 3 boys, one daughter-in-law and 3 grandchildren in Florida.

3. What do you think are some pressing issues in histotechnology that the industry will face in the next year?

One main issue facing technicians in the field of mohs technology is getting the technician certified. In many states the classification for a mohs technician is being implemented as a new technical position under state qualifications. I have personally written guidelines and job descriptions for several states that require state license for the lab technician.

4. Other interesting facts about your personal life.

Most of our time is enjoyed with our family and our many blessings. Our family enjoys skiing in winter months, we just returned from a ski vacation in Colorado. We enjoy visiting the beach in the spring and summer, of course we wear sun screen and keep in touch with our Dermatologist! And then, those of you who know me, I enjoy watching Florida State. GO SEMINOLES!

CALL FOR PAPERS ▼

The ASMH is announcing a "Call for Papers" for the 2005 Abstract Award. The individual who submits the abstract selected for presentation at the 11th Annual Meeting will be awarded \$1,000. Please consider submitting an abstract for review, and possibly sharing your expertise with participants at the meeting. Abstracts are due to dfeldner@execinc.com by April 29, 2005.

An official abstract submission form can be found at <http://www.mohscollege.org/ASMH.htm>



CAREER CORNER

Guidelines for Complimentary Career Corner Postings

- Total ad length should be less than 30 words
- The ad must be submitted in electronic format to dfeldner@execinc.com
- The ad must include information on where applicants are to send their resume
- Ad should also include the city and state of the available position
- Include any job requirements and brief details about the work environment

Tucson, Arizona - Established dermatology practice seeking experienced histotechnician to assist Mohs College trained surgeon. 4 day week / excellent pay and benefits. Email resumes to sdresumes@simplybits.net or fax to (520) 232-5426.

Washington, D.C. - Mohs Histotech for private practice with two Mohs surgeons. Must be willing to assist in patient care. Salary & benefits. Resume to marc.roskelley@martinbraunmd.com or fax to 202-775-1772.

Miami, Florida – Private Mohs surgery practice in Miami looking for a histotechnician. Mohs experience is preferable, but we will provide certified training. Flexible full or part-time position available. Please email lysherman@aol.com or fax resume to (305) 274-7275.

Tampa, Florida - Solo Mohs surgeon in beautiful, brand new office, spacious laboratory, brand-new equipment, electronic medical records searching for HT. Friendly, team-oriented, great opportunity for growth. Please send resume to gr8derm@yahoo.com or FAX to (813) 977-3886.

Atlanta, Georgia - Histologist needed for busy Mohs Surgeon. ASCP registration preferred but not required. Fast paced environment with multiple office locations. Excellent pay and benefits. E-mail resumes to dfrye@myfamilyderm.com or fax to 770-381-6451.

Merrillville/Portage, Indiana - Histotechnologist wanted for surgical dermatology/Mohs practice. Frozen experience necessary, Mohs experience a plus, but will train. Full OR Part Time with option to also work clinically with patients. Great pay and benefits!!! Please contact Dr. Ruchik Desai at 317-506-3614 or email resume to ruchikdesai@hotmail.com.

Louisville, Kentucky - Dermatology Practice in Louisville, KY searching for a Full Time Histotech. Competitive wages and benefits. Send resume to: derma@iglou.com or mail: Administration, 6400 Dutchmans Pkwy, Ste 345, Louisville, KY 40205.

Bensalem, Pennsylvania - Full or part time histo tech to work in Mohs Surgery office in Bensalem, PA. Established 20 years. Fax resume and salary needs to Dr. Wayne Marley @ 215-860-0120.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - Mohs tech needed for fun, laid back, private practice in western suburbs of Philadelphia. FT or PT. Excellent compensation and benefits. Respond to mainlinemohs@yahoo.com or fax (610) 828-3869.

Nashville, Tennessee - Mohs Histotech. Full or part-time. Fax resume to Dr. Carla Retief at (615) 292-8424.

Tyler, Texas - Histologist for busy surgical dermatology practice, Mohs experience preferable. Full time - Mon-Fri only, no nights or weekends. Full benefit package including 401k. Fast paced environment. Fax resume to Debbie at 903-939-0755.



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Board of Directors Nomination Form

ASMh is holding a major election in 2005. All Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) and one member of the Board of Directors will be elected by the membership for the next term. Officers serve two year terms; Directors serve three year terms.

Nominations for these positions will be accepted until May 2, 2005, and should be sent, faxed, or e-mailed to the ASMh office. Official ballots will be mailed in June.

Please complete the following and return to ASMh by May 2, 2005

I would like to nominate the following individual for the position of:

- President
 Vice President
 Secretary
 Treasurer
 Board Member

Nominee: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail: _____

Signature of Nominee: _____

I would like to see this person elected (or I would like to be elected) to the board because (please type - 250 words maximum):

Return this form to

ASMh Board Nominations
555 East Wells Street, Suite 1100, Milwaukee, WI 53202

Phone: (414) 347-1103
Fax: (414) 276-3349
E-mail: dfeldner@execinc.com



2005 Membership Application

Please print or type.

Name: _____
First MI Last

Choose preferred greeting: Mr. Ms. Mrs. Dr.

Credentials [HT, HTL, MD, RN, etc.]: _____

Gender: Male Female Birth Date: _____

Name of ACMMSCO (Mohs College) Physician Who Supervises Mohs Histotechnology Procedures

(Required for membership): _____

Physician Signature: _____

Office Address: _____ Home Address: _____

Telephone #: _____ Fax #: _____ Email Address: _____

Please send Society mail to: Office Address **OR** Home Address

Employment Status - Please check appropriate box.

Full Time Part Time (Hours/week: _____) Student (Fellow) Retired
 Presently Unemployed Other (Please identify): _____

Position - Please check appropriate box.

Physician Nurse Technician* Other (Please identify): _____

*For informational purposes and in order for ASMHI to evaluate its resources, please consider answering the following question:

As a technician, do you have a certification or degree? If so, please indicate below.

HT HTL Other (Please identify): _____

Is there any other information you would like the Society to know about your background? If necessary, attach a separate sheet to this application.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this application form, with a **non-refundable application fee of \$25.00** to:

American Society for Mohs Histotechnology
555 East Wells Street, Suite 1100
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Please note: If accepted for membership, annual dues are assessed. The dues are \$125 per calendar year. Thank you. We look forward to having you as a member!



AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MOHS HISTOTECHNOLOGY

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- President's Message
- Letter From The Editor
- A New Surgery Center – New Insights
- Tips for Difficult Cases
- Call For Papers
- Member Profile – Barbara Beck, HT (ASCP)
- Career Opportunities
- Top 10 Reasons to be an ASMH Member
- Board Nomination Form
- And More!