

An Introduction To AmSECT

The American Society of Extra-Corporeal Circulation Technicians is an academic society formed in 1964 to promote intercommunication among heart-lung machine technicians, artificial kidney technicians, regional perfusion technicians, and others who are concerned with the movement and treatment of blood in an extra-corporeal circuit.

Its purpose is the dissemination of information yielded by three sources: the doctors with whom we work, the manufacturers who produce our equipment and supplies, and other technicians. Thus, technical, practical, and physiological data is available to all.

A major goal of the Society concerns the development of a system of certification in order to engender a uniformity of experience among technicians. This leads to the necessity of an educational program in which a society journal is vital. Again, it follows that a third goal must be the stimulation of personal research and the compiling of the experiences of individual technicians.

The Society sponsors a national meeting at least once each year which combines a program of papers, a workshop feature, exhibits, and social functions. Each such meeting is held in a different city and is jointly sponsored by the technicians in that area.

The Society is subdivided into regional chapters, each of which is coordinated by a chairman and is virtually autonomous as pertains to their regional function. Thus, frequency of regional meetings, their content, group activities, and the like are left to the individual regional group. For example, one chapter meets every other month at a different hospital or laboratory. After a short business meeting, a member will give a report on an article from a journal on a pertinent topic. Periodically, a guest speaker or film will be substituted. Coffee is served during an informal "shop talk" session after which a tour is conducted of the facility sponsoring the meeting.

A young organization, its history is short. Growing out of a small, five state group in the Chicago area, a national organizational meeting held in April of 1964 at Mount Sinai Hospital in Chicago drew 25

technicians from over ten states. A second meeting, held in July, brought even more technicians. On October 31, 1964, at the Cleveland Clinic, the final meeting of the year registered 85 technicians. The 1965 meeting, held on May 17 at the University of Minnesota, presented its program to over 100 technicians. A directory of almost three hundred technicians is currently available.

Membership, at this time, is open to anyone working in the field of extracorporeal circulation (as defined in the opening paragraph). Dues are paid at a rate of ten dollars per calendar year and entitle the individual to full voting membership. Associate memberships are available to interested persons not directly associated with applied technical work in extracorporeal circulation, such as manufacturer's representatives or hospital personnel, at the same annual rate. The titles of membership categories may vary after the board examination is established and the registry is instituted. Life memberships can be obtained for a stipend of one hundred dollars. Also, honorary memberships are awarded to members who have rendered outstanding service to the Society.

The "AmSECT Newsletter" and Journal are provided for all members. Manuscripts for insertion in the Journal may be submitted by anyone, member or not, who has information he believes appropriate to members of the Society. Besides these papers, the Journal also contains the proceedings of the national meeting. The "Newsletter" is a quarterly communication geared to keeping the membership aware of current events.

This issue is published and circulated with the hope that all who read it will recognize the value of this organization and alert anyone who might be interested in its existence. Any correspondence may be directed to the chairmen of the regional chapters who can provide copies of the constitution and membership blanks.

Edward C. Berger

Publications Chairman