Presidents Message

As you must know, trying to put three years' work — the laughter, the tears, the triumphs, the failures — into thoughts that we can leave with you all is a difficult task. Many times I have said, "I must stop and write." But there was always work to be done, and of course, the question, "What shall I say?" But now there is a deadline to be met, so I must try.

First and most important — words of gratitude and appreciation. And I cannot begin to name names — for you are legion. Not just the people with whom we have worked these past three years; but we must go back to the beginning and acknowledge all who have gone before. Foundations for many goals that we have seen fulfilled were laid long ago by tireless, loving hands. Of course, mistakes were made. But we who came after, were spared pitfalls and benefited from those errors. Just as those to come will benefit from our stumblings.

To AmSECT's First Medical Advisory Board, The Fathers of Extra-Corporeal Circulation. A little over a year ago we said, "Your children, the technologists, may not have been born (through academic programs). But like Topsy, we are very much here! And it is time, indeed past time, that we and our profession were acknowledged through certification." Our gratitude to them cannot be expressed because it was with and through their help and support that we saw the first Certification Examination in Extra-Corporeal Technology in 1972.

Our gratitude to them in no way overshadows the thanks we owe to the many hard working people who made up our examination. Along with these, we thank the "Grandfathers" who took the test to give us the broad data base upon which future examination, as well as our continuing education programs, are being based.

Just a small word, thanks, but with so much meaning behind it; goes to our friends, the manufacturers and their representatives. Without their financial support, their participation and advice, AmSECT would have ceased to exist long ago. We look forward to working with our old friends and to making new friends in this field in the future.

As most of you know, AmSECT has had its share of management problems. But these are not serious problems, except that they have interfered with our ability to communicate with you all well. We would like to compare management to our pumps. Necessary? Certainly! But they are only the mechanics — it takes the hands — you members, the heart — your president, and the brains — your Board, to do the important part of the job. No conscientious technologist blames his equipment for his inadequacies. While we do not mean to minimize the importance of our mechanical equipment or of business management, we do mean to put them in proper perspective. AmSECT, our Society, your means to serve your profession, is you! It has served you perhaps in proportion to what you have put into it. All of you are necessary, each plays his or her part. Remember, we are as strong as the sum of our parts. The group, and you are the majority, who says, "Thank you, you're doing a great job" gives your officers the courage and strength to continue. The part played by the vocal minority for whom nothing is ever right is also a necessary part of any Society. For these assure us that we are progressing. The only way to avoid criticism is to say nothing, do nothing, and be nothing. And that is what AmSECT has not done!

At meetings this year of ACS, STS, and AATS, there has been top level discussion of perfusionists and standards for perfusionists. This has been in response to the lead taken by your Society, AmSECT. We have shown that we care, that we want to upgrade ourselves and our profession. We have been able to do this with the help of our Medical Advisory Board and the support of Dr. Vincent Gott and the ASAIO. It is only after AmSECT has assumed its rightful role of leadership in this aspect of our profession that we have gained recognition and support from these professional Medical Societies. We have just received word from Dr. Earle Kay, President of STS, that STS would like to have representation on our Medical Advisory Board. We shall of course, again extend our invitation to them. We most certainly welcome their advice and support.

We have formulated plans for greater activity on a regional level. These will be discussed in Los Angeles. This is where our strength must lie. The regions are where our greatest opportunity for continuing education is.

Most of our time must be spent looking to the future. While we look back with some satisfaction at the many goals achieved, acknowledging always the many who made these possible, we also think of the many difficulties borne by this and previous administrations. Certainly, while much work lies ahead, it will hopefully be over smoother roads. It has to be — we've worn down the rough spots with sheer determination and "true grit"!!

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Our hopes for the future — really these hopes lie in the continuation of the progress made to date. Our Certification Program is well established. We have been asked to have our examination administered by the American Embassy in South Africa. One of our members from the Netherlands was certified last year. And we have enquiries from Denmark, as well as South and Central America about participation in our Certification Examination. As you can see, Certification in Extra-Corporeal Technology is recognized. It is important!!

While we are speaking of far-away places, I am happy to be able to report that AmSECT shall be officially represented by your President at the French and German meetings of perfusionists this June. We shall bring greetings and an invitation on your behalf to attend AmSECT's Eleventh International Conference. Their Presidents will be presented with a certificate of Honorary Membership in AmSECT. And by way of Southern Hospitality, I'll bring honorary citizenship certificates from and keys to the City of New Orleans.

We would like to go forward working toward establishment of a certifying body, The Board of Extra-Corporeal Technology, Inc. With the advice of our Medical Advisory Board, steps in this direction are being undertaken.

Certainly there is much to be done. AmSECT must establish continuing education programs in which all technologists will be required to participate in order to maintain their certification.

AmSECT has enlisted the help of AANNT in setting dialysis standards. The certification of technologists and the setting of dialysis standards of practice is of paramount importance with the coming of HR 1.

AmSECT with AANNT has a vital role to play here and now. Once again, we urge greater participation by all involved in this life-saving discipline.

Fellow AmSECT members and all technologists in the field of Extra-Corporeal Circulation Technology — you are important!! Once again, I must say, it is a proud and humbling profession. In the operating room, you are the heart and lungs to your fellow man. In organ preservation, you are the guardians of the vital gift of life — from one human being to another. In the dialysis center, you are the kidneys — the sustainer of life just as you are in membrane lung support. With cardiac assist devices, you surely snatch back those on the brink of death.

The horizons of extra-corporeal circulation are boundless. We have fashioned a Society, AmSECT, to serve a fine profession. Let us always keep in mind which is the goal and which the means to that goal. In service to this profession AmSECT's future has never been brighter.

You are important to that future. The destiny of Extra-Corporeal Circulation is yours to help shape. I know that you will live up to and surpass our highest expectations.

Once more, I would like to express the appreciation of AmSect's Officers and my own to all those who have smoothed our paths. Sometimes it was a steep path — the summit seemed not in sight — but when we would have faltered, there were always helping hands. It has been my privilege to work with and for you. To you all goes my deepest gratitude for that opportunity. We look forward to a bright future with all working together in service to our profession.

Kathryn
Kathryn Hargesheimer
President

Editorial Comment

This is a year for the members of AMSECT to realize that a society is made up of members and that we, the members, make the society, and that whatever our worth is,-leans to the society. The national office is merely a collecting and feeding place for information, feed nothing in, you get nothing out.

It is clearly realized that our efforts are devoted to certification which is about time! But we must not neglect the most important thing, that is, being members. For what good is certification with no members.

Human nature has a tendency of going to extremes. One is given basic principles and is expected to apply those principles accordingly. A natural cry is not good enough. The people do not have the knowledge, understanding and wisdom to do that. We must tell them what they can and cannot do. Yet, we must remember we are the members and that our cries are amidst ourselves.

Not all elements of personal worth are always implied. The traits which lend value to an individual are not so easily numbered; full speech over them asks for volumes, many and large, unable to mention all the qualities of mind and heart that create wealth for the members and lend strength and beauty to our society. This offers some studies in the society that endure and will be followed by a study of the whole society and the society problem.

In the final analysis it is ignorance that wastes; it is knowledge that saves; it is wisdom that gives precedence. If sleep is the brother of death, ignorance is full brother to both sleep and death. Eyes he has, but he cannot see the length of his hand; ears he has, and all the finest sounds in creation escape him; a tongue he has, and it is forever blundering. Let us take care that this cannot be justifiably said of us.
An educated mind is one fully awakened to all the sights and scenes and forces in the world through which it moves. Education is mind-husbandry; it changes the size but not the sort. But analysis shows that the variance is one of education and ideas. Whoever scourges himself to a task he hates serves a hard master, and the slave will get but scant pay. Men may produce much by industry and ability and yet destroy more by the malign elements they carry.

Integrity enhances human worth. Iniquities devastate a society like fire and pestilence. Conscience in a cashier has a cash value. If arts and industries are flowers and fruits, moralities are the roots that nourish them. It has been said for a man to betray his trust, is for him to stand on the same intellectual level with a monkey that scalds its throat with boiling water because it is thirsty.

The measure of greatness in a member is determined by the intellectual streams and moral tides flowing down the ancestral hill and emptying into the entire society. Another measure of a member value to the society is found in his intellectual level. A test of a member value to the society is an intellectual one. The largest wastes of any member are through ignorance. Failure is want of knowledge; success is the willingness to reach out and find it.

One of the greatest pleasures of life is to pursue and to attain; to endeavor and to overcome. The overcoming of difficulties is the zest and flavor of life. Better to be dead than to live without aim. Action is life; inaction is death. Work is a blessing; idleness a curse. There are many who start out well, determined to succeed but they work with fitful effort. They toil a while with promise of great achievement, then they tire, they do not succeed fast enough. They become impatient and try some other line of action. The end finds them with their life work unfinished.

A member who has no purpose in the society is apt to later find a void in his career. A member who aims at nothing cannot reasonably expect to hit anything. The objective is the point to be made, the thing to be done, and when the point is made success follows. Every society should have an objective, a clearly defined purpose, and work up to it with undeviating persistence. This is the only way to succeed.

What would you think of the man who should start on a journey, and becoming weary on the way, should lie down in some tempting shade and abandon his project or should be lured from the course by some enticing company or some idle tale or should he turn back when nearly or even not more than half way there and seek another object in an opposite direction?

The society with a purpose seeks a goal and depends upon itself for what it is to be and do. It seeks the advice of others but leans on itself not others and hence grows strong. Place an acorn in the crevice of a barren rock and it will strike down its roots and send them out in search of festering places, until it will surround the rock with a net of clinging fibers; and while the winds grow fiercer, and the storms howl wilder, the oak will strike deeper and wider its anchoring roots. It will brace itself to meet the emergencies of its life. It will nerve its energies to stand its ground. It will gather vigor from every storm, resolution from every wind, strength from every trial, energy from every defiant bolt of heaven.

So it is with a society with members of purpose. The one thing in mind all the while, whether asleep or awake, is the fulfillment of its purpose. The purpose governs its course. Every trial of its character, every storm that blows only add strength to better enable it to carry out its purpose. A purpose overcomes difficulties not with a rush or shout, but one by one.

Yes. This is the year for certification and it's about time, but let us not forget there are many other things to be considered like ethics, finance, continuous education, and most important, the role we play as members. Let him who knoweth what is in us reply. After all, the kind of purpose a member carries about in one's self is the important thing, and the society as a whole takes all its grace, color and value from that. For man's reason is overhung by imagination. It can rain as rich treasures fertilizing our cause or lie dormant and die.

Shannon Lucas