PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE . . . . . . William H. Anderson, Ph.D.

What a rapid year! It seems impossible that 1991 and the current terms of office have almost come to an end. Our annual meeting in Montreal was a tremendous success with approximately 140 SOFT members able to attend. I would like to extend the Society’s gratitude to our Canadian hosts for a scientifically and socially stimulating week. Special thanks go to Bill Robinson, our SOFT liaison for this meeting.

During the past year, the Society of Forensic Toxicologists has continued to contribute to our profession by co-sponsoring the publication of the Forensic Laboratory Guidelines and by re-establishing its position on hair testing in the workplace.

I would like to thank the current officers and the board of directors for all of their help and support during this term. I would like to especially thank the members for allowing me to serve as president of the Society. As this year ends, the future for SOFT looks bright with Dr. Jeanne Beno and her capable slate of officers and directors ready and willing to lead and serve.
CONGRATULATIONS, 1992 S.O.F.T. OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Jeanne M. Beno, Ph.D.
VICE PRESIDENT: Alphonse Poklis, Ph.D.
SECRETARY: Vina Spiehler, Ph.D.
TREASURER: Mark B. Lewis, B.S.

Additional Directors:
Robert J. Osiewicz, Ph.D.
Vickie W. Watts, M.S.
H. Chip Walls, B.S.

Ronald C. Backer, Ph.D.
Joseph J. Soody, Ph.D.
William H. Anderson, Ph.D. (ex officio)

NOTICE: THE S.O.F.T. BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL MEET DURING THE A.A.F.S. MEETING IN NEW ORLEANS
TENTATIVELY: WEDNESDAY MORNING BREAKFAST MEETING - FEBRUARY 19, 1992

COMMUNIQUE from Patricia Mohn-Monforte, S.O.F.T. Executive Coordinator
1013 Three Mile Drive, Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230-1412 (Tel: 313-884-4718)

This is a new feature to disseminate information from the S.O.F.T. Administrative Office to the S.O.F.T. membership at large.

CANADIAN TAX REBATE: If you have not submitted for refundable G.S.T. taxes incurred during the SOFT meeting in Montreal, gather your receipts and call 613-991-3346 for appropriate forms and instructions. Allow 6-8 weeks for your refund.

DON'T HANG UP!! Besides being the first line from a great "golden-oldie" this is also good advice when calling the SOFT office. This is a private line that is usually answered, "hello." This saves hundreds of dollars a year that would be required to install a line devoted to SOFT.

FORENSIC TOXICOLOGY LABORATORY GUIDELINES are available for $25 (or $35 outside the U.S.), checks or money orders in U.S. funds only. The Guidelines have already been ordered from all parts of the globe.

SCREAMING YELLOW - remember the dues notice that arrived with your last issue of ToxTalk? The dues FORM is as important as the dues check because it is the basis for the new data base being established at the Administrative Office.

NEW SOFT DIRECTORY should be included in the next issue of ToxTalk. If you are not included in the new data base, your name will not appear in the new directory (see SCREAMING YELLOW above). To be sure your name is included, return your dues form by February 1, 1992 (the ToxTalk deadline). Do not forget to include any degree(s), etc. after your name if you want them to appear as such in the directory, i.e. Ph.D., B.S., D.A.B.F.T.

NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORMS will soon be available. The old form will not be accepted after 1/01/92.

PLAN UNDERWAY FOR EXCITING 1992 S.O.F.T. MEETING

OCTOBER 12-17 HARTFORD, CT

Call for Papers will be mailed with the next issue of ToxTalk (probable deadline for abstracts: July 1, 1992)

EXHIBITORS: We don't want to "leaf" you out next fall. Register early. 1991 was sold out!!

For the latest information, contact: C. Neal Reading, Ph.D.
P.O. Box 2689
Hartford, CT 06144
(203-566-4258)

TOXTALK Volume 15, No. 4 (DECEMBER 1991 - page 2)
1992 BUDGET:

$15,300 TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENSES

$1,000 Annual Meeting Advance  
700 Board Meetings  
3,500 E.R.A. (based on 1991 interest)  
2,800 Executive Coordinator  
1,000 IRS (F990)

$ 200 Legal/Corporate State Fees  
1,100 Officer Expenses (4)  
550 Reception (AAFS Meeting)  
350 Supplies, stationery  
4,100 Printing/Publication (ToxTalk)

$15,300 TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUES

$ 300 Application Fees  
10,500 Dues and Assessments  
3,500 Interest  
1,000 Annual Meeting Repayment

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FEE:

As approved by the Board, this will be increased to $10 effective January 1, 1992.

DUES:

The response to the 1992 SOFT Dues Notice which was included in the last issue of ToxTalk has been pretty good, about 40% as of this printing. Second notices will not be mailed out until January, at which time you will be required to pay the $7 late fee. The late fee assessed members paying after the December 31, 1991, deadline helps defray the cost of postage, additional printing, and fee for services. (This job has been assigned to Pat, our Executive Coordinator, since it requires a lot of time.)

Remember, the database, which as of 1/01/92 will be the basis for all mailing labels (including ToxTalk) and the new SOFT Membership Directory, relies on the dues notice for all information. Information confirmation slips will be mailed to those who have paid their 1992 due at the same time the late dues notices are mailed to those in arrears, probably around February 1st. A March 1st response deadline applies for inclusion in the Directory.

IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE YOUR 1992 S.O.F.T. DUES NOTICE

call 313-884-4718 immediately (leave a message)

Thank you to the following BellDers (147) whose dues have been received as of 11/16/91:

R ALTMAN, JR  W ANDERSON  T APPEL  K BALDWIN-CAS  M BARNHILL, J  M BARTALINI  R BASIELT
R BATEH  B BECK  L BEDNARCZYK  P BENCHLER  J BENO  E BERNER  R BLANKE
L BLUM  K BOGDZIEMICZ  S BOGEMA  R BOST  E BRIGLIA  C BRUNO  B BUCHAN
R BYLER  J CAGIE  D CANFIELD  D CANNON  P CARPENTER  D CASH  R COHN
W COLLON  V CORDOVA  R CRAVEY  R CZARNY  P DAVIS  R DELUCA  F DOLEJSI
K DUBOWSKI  D DUFFY  W DUNN  T ECKER  H EGER  M EISGHOELY  C FLETTERICK
J FREITAG  D FRITCH  E FROM  H GARBER  M GERE  P GIAGUNTA, B FREDERICK
A GREENSPAN  G GRINSTEAD  G HARDIN  S HARDY  S HAWKINS  B GOLDBERGER
C HODNETT  C HORNBECK  L HOWARD  M HUEUITS  G JACKSON  R HILDERBRAND
G JONES  J JONES  J JONES  B JOYNT  R KINCAID  J JANSSEN
M KIHLMAN, JR  K LAROSSE  M LAPPAS  J LAWRENCE  L LEDONNE-DRA  R KRASESSEL
M LEWIS  D MAGINN  J MANNETTA  B MANKO  J LEHRER  R KUCHAIK
A MCBAY  F MCLURE, II  D MCOY  R MCBARRY  J MANNINO  D MARCOVICH  E MARKER
A MUDARRIS  S NEURINBERGER  J NIED  D NITTSKOFF  B O'ROURKE  E GERTLI
H PEEL  R PHILLIPS  P PIZZO  A POLKIS  R PROUTY  G PURNEILL
D READING  J REED  T REJENT  F RIEDERS  M RIEDERS  D ROBERTS
K SCHMENZER  L SERRANO  J SEXTON  E SHINOMURA  T SIMONICK  M RICHARDSON
R SMITH  J SPEAKER  V SPIEHLER  J SPIKES  E SPRATT  M SLOUNGE
J STRICKLAND  L STRUEMPLER  I SUNSHINE  C SUHEIMER  J TAYLOR  G STAZAJC
J TURK  D TURRIF  G VALLARO  A VALLON-FRAN  M WAHBA  H WALLS
V WATTS  H WEINGARTEN  D WELLS  C WINEK  N WU CHEN  G YEARIN
J ZETTL

TOXTALK Volume 15, No. 4 (DECEMBER 1991 - page 3)
An unofficial accounting tells me that there are more contributors to this issue of ToxTalk than to any previous issue that I have had the pleasure of editing. This has always been my concept of the newsletter’s intent. My thanks to all who have contributed, not only to this issue, but also in the past.

The December issue contains the first of a series of articles resulting from "an offer I couldn't refuse": James G. Wigmore, a SOFT member employed at the Centre of Forensic Sciences in Toronto, responded to my request for submissions in the last issue of ToxTalk. Jim informed me he has a special interest in the forensic aspects of alcohol and has collected and translated over 40 articles written in German on this subject. Consequently, he offered to provide a synopsis of selected articles for ToxTalk. The first installment appears below under "Technical Notes." I am sure we will all benefit from these synopses representing important literature contributions which may not have been available to many members.

Material continues to be collected for our previously-announced features:

MARCH 1992 TOXTALK: "ANTIDEPRESSANTS," Brad Hepler editing
JUNE 1992 TOXTALK: "DUID," Chip Walls editing

Note that Brad is replacing Chip as special topic editor for the March issue since, as chairman of SOFT's DUID Committee, Chip offered to solicit papers for the June issue. We have some case notes already for the March issue but more would be welcome. Please submit material for either issue to the indicated special subject editor. (Specific instructions are on page 8.)

The print in this issue of ToxTalk is slightly smaller than the last issue, thereby reducing the number of pages in this issue. This results in savings on both printing and mailing costs but does not reduce the amount of information contained in the issue. (Remember, I am constantly under the scrutiny of Treasurer Mark Lewis and am accountable to the Board of Directors.) Hopefully, there has been no decrease in the quality of the printed product.

TECHNICAL NOTES: "BLUTALKOHOLKONZENTRATION"

Submitted by J. G. Wigmore, Toxicology Section, Centre of Forensic Sciences, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Studies on the Effect of Vomiting on the Blood Curve During Continuous Blood Alcohol Determination

Experiments were conducted as to the effect of vomiting on BAC, since it is known that vomiting disturbs water, mineral and acid-base balance and can cause a pronounced collapse of the peripheral vessels, especially those of the skin. All these factors could potentially influence the BAC.

Twenty subjects were given 1g/kg ethanol diluted with isotonic saline solution infused IV over 30 minutes. BACs were determined continuously by the method of LIETHOFF and analysed by an ADH procedure. After 60 to 90 minutes when the BAC curve showed a linear decrease within normal values, 10 subjects received Apomorphine IM at a dose of 10 mg, and 10 subjects received 100 mL of a copper sulphate solution p.o., to induce vomiting. All subjects were in a semi-reclined position in a chair throughout the experiment. Two to six minutes after the Apomorphine was injected, the subjects experienced intense nausea and violent "retching" which lasted up to an hour and in one case over 2 hours! During the first 5 to 10 minutes of vomiting, the subjects were so ill that they could not speak. The skin of the subjects became very pale.

For the ten subjects who consumed the copper sulphate solution, the authors report that the symptoms were relatively mild and that minor vomiting occurred after 1 to 6 minutes. However, the subjects did not look sick.

Vomiting had NO significant effect on the BAC curve as determined by continuous blood sampling for both groups of subjects and caused NO irregularities of the BAC curve. The authors indicate that slight fluctuation in the BAC curve were the products of sensitivity of the recorder.

Blood glucose and blood hemoglobin concentrations were also determined in the subjects. Hemoglobin concentrations showed no change due to vomiting, and blood glucose showed a distinct increase after vomiting. The authors indicate that some earlier studies on the effect of vomiting on BAC were flawed in that capillary blood samples were collected and could be influenced by the collapse of the peripheral vessels in the skin. The authors stated that "...due to the uniformity of the results combined with the consideration that the subjects were undergoing quite severe stress, led us to limit our experiments to 10 subjects per emetic." The conclusion of the English summary is that "In respect to these results there should be no special forensic-medical opinion of the ethanol level in blood after vomiting."
POISON BY "MAGIC POTION"

U.S. VIRGIN ISLAND POLICE SEEK S.O.F.T.'s ASSISTANCE

Please find listed below information regarding 3 cases with victims under investigation by the U.S. Virgin Island Police department as homicides. In all cases the victims ingested a "Magic Potion" apparently as part of a ritual to obtain good luck. All of the victims are Caribbean area natives. The cyanide concentrations are noted below.

May 24, 1984: Adult male of African descent
Blood: 3.6 PPM
Lung: 1.45 PPM
Gastric contents: 27 PPM

Sept. 13, 1986: Adult female of Puerto Rican (European/African) descent
Blood: 10 µg/mL

Adult male of African descent
Blood: 14 µg/mL
Cyanide (no levels given) was also found in the livers and gastric contents of both subjects.

Nov. 18, 1988: Adult male of East Indian descent
Blood: 5 PPM
Urine: 0.1 PPM
* Tissue: 7 PPM
Gastric contents: 200 PPM

Adult female of East Indian Descent
Blood: 10 PPM
Urine: 1 PPM
* Tissue: 10 PPM
Gastric contents: 750 PPM

* Editor's note: specific tissue not indicated by author

If you have any information regarding similar type cases, please contact Capt. Peter Anderson or Lt. J.L. Rhymer at 809-778-1369, 778-1001, or FAX 809-778-4950. Mailing address: Patrick Sweeney Headquarters, R.R. 02, Kingshill, U.S.V.I. 00850

FATAL METHOMYL POISONINGS IN CRETE

Contributed by E.N. Macniodimitrakis and A.M. Tsatsaklis, University of Crete, School of Medicine, Dept. of Forensic Sciences, Greece

Crete is an island in the center of the Mediterranean Sea with a population of about 500,000. The economy is based mainly on agriculture services. During a twelve-month period, Spring 1990-91, a significant number of fatal methomyl poisonings were detected in the laboratory of the Department of Forensic Sciences (9 cases).

Methomyl is a carbamate insecticide (trade name Lannate) widely used in agriculture. Four cases were suicides, three homicides, and two were accidental due to use of trade pesticide and improper housekeeping. This number of cases exceeds those due to other pesticide products (e.g. mostly paraquat "Gramoxone," organophosphates) plus those due to pharmaceutical substances, mostly flunitrazepam and narcotics.

Ethanol was present in the blood in many of the cases. The methomyl quantity extracted from stomach contents after homogenization procedures varied between 1.3 - 2.9 g. The most effective extraction procedure used chloroform. Blood methomyl concentrations, determined with HPLC methods after extraction procedures, varied from 8 - 56 mg/L. Methomyl extraction was best carried out with chloroform from blood made alkaline with diluted ammonia solution.

UNUSUAL CYANIDE FINDINGS IN TWO FIRE-RELATED FATALITIES

Contributed by Marc De Gouffe, R.C.M.P. Central Forensic Laboratory, Ottawa, Ontario

CASE 1

HISTORY OF DEATH: A 46-year-old man was found face down in the bathroom. It is believed that he was overcome by smoke following a fire which started in his bedroom. Earlier he was seen at a bar and was taken home by a friend. His wife stated that he often smoked in bed. At the conclusion of the investigation it was felt that smoking while being intoxicated by alcohol probably had caused the fire. CAUSE OF DEATH: Asphyxia due to inhalation of soot in the trachea and lungs.

LABORATORY FINDINGS:

Alcohol: (peripheral blood) 200 mg/L
CO: (peripheral blood) 38% saturation not detected
Cyanide: (peripheral blood) 1.6 mg/L

COMMENTS: In each of these two cases cyanide was found to be present in peripheral blood but was not found in cardiac blood. The reason for this is at yet unknown; however, it does show the importance of sampling autopsy blood from both cardiac and peripheral sites.
A Selected Bibliography for "Death By Poisons"
Lessons Learned from the Past... In the now classic 1974 book by L. Adelson, M.D., "The Pathology of Homicide," the only chapter on murder is entitled "Murder by Poison." A few citations of non-drug related deaths from this chapter.


Following the same "vein" as the last issue of TOXICUSHCAP, the "One that almost get away", this review is slanted towards compounds that might, through a routine toxicological examination, escape detection.

A more current selection of poisoning literature picked to provoke thought and to highlight only a few unusual or run of the mill type cases -- send in your favorite references.


2. 1980 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF POISON CONTROL CENTERS NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM. American Journal of Emergency Medicine (ISSN 0735-6757), Volume 8, Number 5 (September 1981). This database has been published for the past 5 to 7 years. The 1980 issue has 612 reported fatalities. A particularly useful point to this database is data on unusual poisoning and a brief but concise case history and the physical findings. ??? How can there be only 612 fatalities reported last year. How can Medical Examiner's data be integrated with poison control center data???

3. ADMISSION TO A PEDIATRIC INTENSIVE CARE UNIT FOR POISONING: A REVIEW OF 105 CASER [LETTER, COMMENT]. Stern, A. Crit-Care-Med. 1990 SEP; 18(9); p 1051.


ELMER GORDON OPEN FORUM

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INFORMAL DIALOGUE

Randall Baselt reports he has the remaining stock of the following and will make these available to SOFT members at reduced rates as long as the supplies last:

Lauwers: INDUSTRIAL CHEMICAL EXPOSURE (1983) @ $15 each
Cravey: INTRODUCTION TO FORENSIC TOXICOLOGY (1981) @ $45 each

Contact Lana Mak, Chemical Toxicology Institute, P.O. Box 8209, Foster City, CA 94404 (Tel: 415-573-6222 FAX: 415-574-6698)

FREE LISTING in a 'Sourcebook' citing technical experts and laboratories. For a form for free individual or company listing, contact Assets Protection Publishing, P.O. Box 5323, Madison, WI 537-0323 (Tel: 608-271-6788 FAX: 608-271-4520)

DON'T FORGET: MAIL YOUR 1992 SOFT DUES BEFORE 1/1/92

PROFESSIONAL CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF TOXICOLOGISTS quarterly meetings and workshops. For information contact Susen Knight (1-800-854-0277) or Thomas Sneath (805) 322-4250.

NORTHEASTERN ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC SCIENTISTS meeting: October 18 & 19, 1991, Melville, NY (Long Island). Workshops include Stress Debriefing, and arson-related topics. Contact Peter Pizzola 914-377-7758.


Spring 1992 2-1/2 day FORENSIC TOXICOLOGY SEMINAR sponsored by the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology and American Registry of Pathology. For information, contact Barry Levine 202-576-2310

"PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE IN TOXICOLOGY: A REVIEW" June 21-25, 1992 sponsored by AACC and NACB at the University of Cincinnati. Contact Joanna Glenn, AACD, 2029 K Street, NW, 7th floor, Washington, DC 20006 or call SOFT member Donald Cannon, Ph.D., 513-745-1359, FAX 513-745-1321

S.O.F.T. ANNUAL MEETING - OCTOBER 12-17, 1992 - HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT: For further information, contact C. Neal Reading, Ph.D., P.O. Box 1689, Hartford, CT 06144 (telephone: 203-586-4258)


CALL FOR CASE NOTES FOR TOXTALK (AND INSTRUCTIONS)

REQUESTED TOPICS: ANTIDEPRESSANTS - submit to Bradford Hepler, WCMEO, 400 E Lafayette, Detroit, MI 48226 (313-224-6459) before 2/01/92
DUID - submit to Chip Walls, Tox Lab, Rm 706, 600 S State St, Syracuse, NY 13202 (315-435-3801) before 6/01/92

Material should be submitted in "print-ready" form whenever possible: 8-1/2" x 11" white paper; top and side margins = 1/4" e bottom margin = 1/2"; condensed print, do not waste space. Length should not exceed 1 page; 1/2 page preferred for case notes. Priority given to papers on requested topics. For details, contact Dr. Monforte, ToxTalk Editor (313-224-5626).

TOXTALK Volume 15, No. 4 (DECEMBER 1991 - page 8)
November 1, 1991

CALL FOR PAPERS
S.O.F.T./JAT SPECIAL ISSUE

The September/October issue of the *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* will be the 12th annual special issue on forensic toxicology produced in collaboration with the Society of Forensic Toxicologists (S.O.F.T.). The issue will be distributed at the 1992 S.O.F.T. meeting in Connecticut. Chip Walls will be the guest editor for this issue. Manuscripts to be considered for publication should be directed to him at the following address:

H. Chip Walls  
S.O.F.T./JAT Special Issue Editor  
Tox Lab  
Room 706  
600 South State Street  
Syracuse, NY 13202  
Telephone: (315) 435-3802  
Telefax: (315) 435-5720

The deadlines for submissions are as follows:

Abstracts due **March 16, 1992.**
Completed papers due **April 1, 1992.**

If you are considering submitting your paper for a presentation at the next meeting of the Society of Forensic Toxicologists, the following information will be helpful to you.

**S.O.F.T. ANNUAL MEETING**  
October 12 – 19, 1992  
Hartford, CT

For further information, contact:  
C. Neal Reading  
P.O. Box 1689, Hartford, CT 06144  
Telephone: 203-566-4258

Probable deadline for abstracts: **July 1, 1992**