

THE FILTER

American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science-Nebraska
www.ascls-ne.org

Honoring Shirley Noble

Shirley Jean Noble, 57, of Lincoln passed away peacefully on February 6 of esophageal cancer, surrounded by family. She was the beloved wife of A. Dwayne Ball of Lincoln for 31 years, the beloved mother of Allen Dale Ball of Seattle, Washington, and of Amanda Ball Brady of Manhattan, Kansas, all surviving her. She is also survived by her father, Dale Noble, of Carrollton, Ohio; sister Susan Noble Ledford and her husband John Ledford of Carrollton, Ohio; sister Linda Noble Macklin and her husband Edward Macklin of Columbus, Ohio; son-in-law Chad Brady; and aunts and uncles Mary Ann and Al Stockum of Columbus, Ohio; Dorothy and Ed McLean of Amsterdam, Ohio; Doris Brown of Fort Myers, Florida; and Mattie Noble of Alliance, Ohio. She is also survived by many brothers-and sisters-in-law, cousins, nieces, nephews, and other loving relatives. She was preceded in death by her mother, Nellie Noble, of Carrollton, Ohio, in 2011.

Shirley was born in Canton, Ohio, and grew up in Carrollton. She received her B.S. in Medical Technology and her M.S. in Allied Health from Ohio State University, where she met her husband. For the past 19 years, Shirley was an instructor in the medical laboratory technology program at Southeast Community College in Lincoln. Her great



joys in life were her two children, her family and friends, and her students and colleagues. She loved serving her professional community in the state chapter of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science, serving the schools her children attended, and serving people through her church. She enjoyed gardening, decorating, horse shows, state fairs, and holidays, especially Christmas. She was a cheerful, capable, industrious, gentle, and compassionate soul who brought understanding, comfort, and happiness to many, and whose presence will be greatly missed. The family expresses deep appreciation to the many relatives, colleagues, friends, and medical professionals who gave her joy and care throughout her too-short life, who gave her opportunities to be of service to others, and who helped in her final illness.

Shirley served ASCLS-NE in many roles and was honored with numerous awards.

Honoring Shirley Noble continued from on page 1

Shirley won the Filter Award in 2004. She was NSCLS President from 2001–2002. Shirley coordinated the speakers for the spring meeting on numerous occasions. She served as General Chair for the annual spring meeting, Exhibit Chair, PACE chair, and NMLW chair. Shirley also served as President–elect, Junior Board member, Secretary, nominations chair, and as the Filter editor. She was awarded the Omicron Sigma recognition several years. She was on the Election Committee for ASCLS in 2002 and was a nominee for the Rho Sigma Region VI Distinguished Service Award in 2002.

Donations in honor of Shirley can be made to The Arthritis Foundation of Nebraska, 600 North 93rd Street, Suite 206, Omaha, NE 68114.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Honoring Shirley Noble	1
2012 Annual Spring Meeting Update	2
2012-2013 Board Elections	3
GAC and PAC Report	5
Call to Action-Potential Cuts to Medicare Laboratory	
Reimbursement	7
Quarter 2 Treasurer's Report	8



2012 Annual Spring Meeting Update

Submitted by Chelsea Dockins–Reischel
cdockinsmgm@aol.com

The 2012 ASCLS–NE (in conjunction with CLMA and ASCP) will be held April 18–20, 2012 at the Embassy Suites Omaha–LaVista Hotel & Conference Center.

The planning committee will be releasing more information regarding speakers, the schedule, registration, and vendor exhibit information in the coming days on the ASCLS–NE website (<http://www.ascls-ne.org/>).

We look forward to seeing you there!

Nominations are currently being accepted for 2012 Awards! Award winners will be announced at the Awards Luncheon on Friday, April 20th, at the Spring Meeting. Descriptions of the awards can be found on our Website at www.ascls-ne.org. The deadline to submit a nomination is March 23rd, 2012. Nominations can be mailed to: Alicia Sherry 7812 S 159th St. Omaha, NE 68136 or emailed to alevball_6@hotmail.com.

2012–2013 ASCLS–NE Board Elections

Submitted by Tracey Vrba

The 2012–2013 ASCLS–NE board elections will be held during the 2012 Annual Board Meeting at the 2012 Spring Meeting!! All current ASCLS–NE members are encouraged to attend and vote! Three positions are currently open for nominations.



President–elect

- Nominee: Chelsea Dockins

Education: B.S. Clinical Laboratory Science from UNMC 2008; MBA, Healthcare Concentration from Bellevue University 2010

Employment: Research Sales Representative for Fisher Scientific

ASCLS Membership: 5 years

ASCLS Leadership: New Professional, First Year Professional, New Professional Committee Advisor, Junior Board Member, Senior Board Member (currently).

Treasurer

- Nominee: Marnie Hoff

Education: MBA and BS Medical Technology

Employment: University of Nebraska Medical Center

ASCLS Membership: 2 years

ASCLS Leadership: 2012 Spring Meeting Committee Treasurer

Junior Board Member

- Nominee: Kevin McGuire

Education: B.S. Clinical Laboratory Science from UNMC 2011

Employment: The Nebraska Medical Center

ASCLS Membership: 4 years

ASCLS Leadership: First Year Professional Chair

If you are interested in ASCLS–NE leadership, please contact me at tracey_vrba@hotmail.com!!

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!

Updates from Southeast Community College

Submitted by Janis Bible, Program Chair

The MLT Program at Southeast Community College, Lincoln, has a change for the Medical Advisor. The current Medical Advisor for the MLT Program is Gregory R. Post, Ph.D., DABCC

Congratulations go out to Dawn Amundson and Omya Mohamed on being chosen as recipients for the 2011–2012 Siemens–ASCP Scholarship Program! Dawn and Omya are students in their final clinical year in the Medical Laboratory Technology Program at Southeast Community College, Lincoln Campus.

Dawn was awarded the 2011–2012 ASCP Scholarship and Omya was awarded the 2011–2012 Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics Scholarship. Both have shown outstanding academic achievement in the clinical laboratory science studies, have demonstrated strong leadership, and actively participate in community service.



Save the Date!!

Thursday, April 19th starting at 5:30.

**Limbo contest, Photo-booth, and
more!**



Government Action Committee and Political Action Committee Report

Submitted by Roxanne Alter

Legislative Symposium is scheduled March 19 and March 20th in Washington D.C. I will be participating in the lobbying of our Senators and Congressmen from Nebraska along with our current ASCLS-Ne president Brad Hayes and Student representative Zacadia Carstens.

Things are heating up on the Hill with budget cuts and laboratory reimbursement money on the chopping blocks. Here is an overview.

The HHS Budget in Brief and HRSA Budget are now available online.

The president's FY 2013 request proposes \$228 million for Title VII health professions, a \$40 million (15 percent) cut below FY 2012, and \$251 million for Title VIII nursing workforce development programs, a \$20 million (8 percent) increase over FY 2012. These figures include \$10 million expected from the Prevention and Public Health Fund (PPHF) and \$35 million in transfers from the Public Health Service Evaluation Tap.

As mentioned previously, the budget request proposes to eliminate the Title VII Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) and the Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) program. The budget also proposes increases for the Title VII primary care medicine and the Title VIII Advanced Education Nursing programs, as well as \$5 million for the previously unfunded Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment program established through the Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148 and P.L. 111-152). In addition to the president's proposed funding levels for FY 2013, the budget justification also provides details about the long-awaited FY 2012 funding allocations from the Prevention and Public Health Fund. The public health/preventive medicine line receives \$25 million from the fund, and the mental and behavioral health line gets a \$10 million boost from the fund in FY 2012.

The attached funding table compares the president's proposed funding levels for each Title VII and Title VIII program with enacted levels in FYs 2011 and 2012, and will be posted to HPNEC's website shortly. (Please note the FY 2012 comparables for the public health/preventive medicine and mental/behavioral health lines have been updated to include the FY 12 transfers from the PPHF; other comparables, however, are calculated from the figures in the FY 12 omnibus conference report.)

The HHS Budget in Brief is available at <http://www.hhs.gov/budget/budget-brief-fy2013.pdf>, and the HRSA Budget Justification is available at <http://www.hrsa.gov/about/budget/budgetjustification2013.pdf>.

GAC and PAC Report continued from on page 5

On February 15, I received this information from the ASCLS GAC:

We learned late last night that lab cuts are being proposed as part of the offset for the short term SGR (sustained growth rate) fix. Several sources are reporting the cut is around \$2.7 billion, which is significant given the size of the overall package. It is unclear how the cut would be applied, although we have heard it might be added to the health reform cuts and applied over 10 years.

We are putting together a sign on letter this morning and working with ACLA on talking points. We will have these out to you ASAP. Congress is looking to move the overall package before Friday so our window to act is very small. We will need Senators to weigh in with Baucus and others on the conference committee (see below). We need Representatives to weigh in with House leadership. Where we have lab connections to the conferees we need to utilize those--conferees will need to hear from back home on this issue!

In response to these cuts a letter was drafted:

To The Honorable Max Baucus

Dear Senator Baucus:

The undersigned laboratory and health care organizations, representing America's community, regional, and national laboratories and the Medicare patients we serve, ask that you oppose any cuts to the Medicare Part B Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule as you work to address physician pay cuts. Further reductions to the fee schedule that was just significantly cut during health reform will threaten these businesses, negatively affecting our workforce and our ability to serve the Medicare population.

Cuts on laboratory services will not only threaten seniors' access to tests needed for physicians to manage chronic health conditions, it will also threaten the viability of hundreds of community and regional laboratories across the United States that provide services to the majority of the Medicare population.

Clinical laboratories suffered deep cuts as a result of health reform. The law includes a direct and immediate cut to the Part B Clinical Lab Fee Schedule of 1.75 percent each year from 2011 through 2015. This nine percent cut is the largest cut among all Part B providers. Clinical laboratories also received another cut through the productivity adjustment—one of only a few providers subject to an immediate adjustment in 2011—resulting in an additional 11 percent cut over ten years. Together, the direct cut and the productivity adjustment result in a cumulative 20 percent cut over ten years. Laboratories are also facing up to a 2 percent cut to the fee schedule as a result of sequestration, which begins in January, 2013.

While less than two percent of all Medicare spending, clinical laboratory testing has been subject to significant freezes in payments and cuts over the last two decades. Medicare payment amounts for clinical laboratory services have been reduced by about 40 percent in real (inflation-adjusted) terms over the past 20 years. In some independent clinical laboratories, especially those serving rural

GAC and PAC Report continued from on page 6

communities or nursing home populations, 80 percent or more of their patient-base consists of Medicare beneficiaries. Any additional cuts will threaten their business's existence and cannot be absorbed without adversely impacting patient care.

Our organizations respectfully request that you work to protect access to clinical laboratory services for Medicare beneficiaries oppose any further reduction in the laboratory fee schedule. These cuts affect our ability to provide necessary services that drive over 70 percent of medical decision making, allowing physicians to do their jobs. If you have any questions or we can provide additional information. please contact Julie Allen with the Clinical Laboratory Coalition (202-230-5126 or Julie.Allen@dbr.com) or Alan Mertz with ACLA (202) 637-9466 or amertz@clinical-labs.org).

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely, (Insert Name Here)

The same letter has been sent to all members of the Conference Committee

Call to Action–Potential Cuts to Medicare Laboratory Reimbursement

If you have been keeping up with the news in Washington DC, you are aware that Congress is working to pass a bill to extend the payroll tax cut (which is set to expire on Feb 29), fix the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) issue which would cause physician fees to be reduced by 27% and to extend unemployment benefits. All of these initiatives are important to various segments of the American population, but they all come with a price. While parts of this package are going to be passed without any balance on cost reduction, there is movement to impose a reduction to the Medicare Clinical Laboratory Fee schedule to offset some of the cost. What is being proposed is a \$2.5 billion dollar cut in reimbursement over 10 years. As you are aware our industry has absorbed many cuts in reimbursement since the fee schedule was established in 1984. In addition, reductions in reimbursement were also included in the Healthcare Reform legislation.

We need you to contact your Senators or Representatives in Washington to make them aware that singling out the laboratory, as one segment of the healthcare industry, to bear this level of burden is unfair.

- Ask that they oppose any cuts to the Medicare Part B Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule as they work to address physician pay cuts.
- Further reductions to the fee schedule that was just significantly cut during health reform will threaten laboratories and hospitals negatively affecting our workforce and our ability to serve the Medicare population.
- Cuts on laboratory services will not only threaten seniors' access to tests needed for physicians to manage chronic health conditions, it will also threaten the viability of hundreds of community and regional laboratories across the United States that provide services to the majority of the Medicare population.

Quarter 2 Treasurer's Report

Interim Treasurer's Report

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements

1 July 2011 – 31 January 2012

Submitted by Linsey Donner, MLS (ASCP)^{CM} and Marnie Imhoff, MBA, MLS (ASCP)^{CM}

Money Market balance - 1 July 2011 \$17,245.26

Cash Receipts

Money Market Interest Income	\$10.88
ASCLS membership	\$1,235.00
Spring Meeting 2010	<u>\$8,736.70</u>
Total Money Market cash receipts	\$9,982.58

Disbursements

Transfers to checking account	<u>\$7,525.00</u>
Total Money Market disbursements	\$7,525.00

Money Market account balance 31 January 2012 \$19,702.84

Checking account balance - 1 July 2011 \$947.01

Cash Receipts

Transfers from Money Market	<u>\$7,525.00</u>
Total checking account cash receipts	\$7,525.00

Disbursements

ASCLS National Meeting Attendance	\$6,228.13
Website Maintenance	\$50.93
ASCLS-NE Board Meeting	\$25.64
Region VI Assessment	\$1,300.00
PACE Provider Fee	\$325.00
Treasurer and President Bonding	<u>\$92.00</u>
TOTAL checking account disbursements	\$8,021.70

Checking account balance 31 January 2012 \$450.31

ASCLS-NE SUMMARY OF ASSETS:

Money Market balance 31 January 2012	<u>\$19,702.84</u>
Checking account balance 31 January 2012	\$450.31
Scholarship CD balance 31 January 2012	\$15,806.43
Legislative CD balance 31 January 2012	\$5,289.05
Savings CD balance 31 January 2012	<u>\$11,607.00</u>
ASCLS-NE TOTAL ASSETS - 31 January 2012	\$52,855.63