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In a few days we will meet in Nashville, Tennessee for our 50th Annual Biological Safety Conference. Dan Liberman and his Scientific Program Committee Team, and LouAnn Burnett and her Local Arrangements Committee Team have assembled an educational and entertaining program. The schedule of events may be modified this year in order to accommodate all of the activities, while still maintaining a Sunday through Wednesday conference. This is a result of our steady growth (membership is currently at 1,435) and the fantastic interest expressed by many individuals wishing to present their studies! Many of our colleagues from overseas will be attending the conference. Specifically, we anticipate a large delegation of more than 100 people from the Former Soviet Union, Asia, and the Middle East. Many of them will be attending some pre-conference courses, assisted with simultaneous translations. The 28 scheduled pre-conference courses have been organized by Patrick and Michelle McKinney. Their Educational Operations Committee Team will hopefully satisfy the "thirst for knowledge" of all participants. As during previous conferences, I ask you to please complete the evaluation forms for both the pre-conference courses and the conference program as your comments will help guide our organization for future events.

There are several other points of interest that I would like to mention: The Chesapeake Affiliate of the American Biological Safety Association (ChABSA) held its Annual Scientific Symposium on June 14 in Columbia, Maryland. Bruce Donato and his Scientific Program Committee Team organized a stimulating and educational one-day program. The Keynote Speaker was Dr. David Franz of Midwest Research Institute; Kansas State University, University of Alabama at Birmingham, who gave a presentation entitled *Biological Safety: A Tool of International Diplomacy?* Representing ABSA, I gave a presentation entitled *ABSA—State of Your Organization*. ChABSA was well-funded through various sponsors and vendors providing various products and services for the biological safety community.

The Alliance with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), led by Jim Klenner and Jeff Owens, will be formalized sometime during July and August in Washington, DC. The purpose of this alliance is to establish mutually beneficial relationships with organizations, associations, and agencies. These relationships can assist the

American Biological Safety Association (ABSA) in promoting biological safety (biosafety) as a scientific discipline and serving the needs of biosafety professionals throughout the world.

Of interest to many ABSA members is the recertification process for the designations Certified Biological Safety Professional (ABSA) and Specialist Microbiologist from the National Registry of Microbiologists (NRM). In order to streamline this process, the ABSA Office has submitted an application to the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) to receive continuing education unit (CEU) credit for pre-conference courses. We anticipate approval for the 2007 pre-conference courses. For all future pre-conference and other courses, the ABSA Office will complete the necessary documents for approval by IACET. The National Registry of Microbiologists (NRM) has a voluntary recertification program. Registrants have five years to earn the required 60 hours of continuing education (CE) credits to recertify and to maintain their active NRM status. Registrants must acquire 25 category 1 CE credits of the required 60 hours during the 5-year period. As a service to the Registrants, the NRM will review CE activities and evaluate if they are eligible for category 1 credits for NRM recertification purposes only. Obtaining course credit for NRM recertification is a relatively simple process. ABSA members can use the *CE Point Request Form* to obtain points for ABSA courses completed in the past. CE points will be awarded if activity has significant microbiology content, and is directly relevant to the practice of microbiology. A 0.5 CE will be awarded for each hour of educational activity, with each activity capping at 5.0 CE. These CE points are acceptable for Category 1 credits for NRM recertification only. They are not acceptable for NRM examination eligibility. The recertification form can be accessed at www.asm.org/ASM/files/ccLibraryFiles/FILENAME/000000001595/NRM%20recertification%20form.doc. Please contact Kimberley Ver Ploeg, NRM Certification Program Assistant, at kverploeg@asmusa.org for a copy of the *CE Point Request Form*.

As I mentioned in my previous column, Council Member Dr. Robert Ellis, Colorado State University (CSU), will offer a two-year graduate program in biological safety at CSU beginning January 2008. Upon successful completion of the requirements, participants will re-

ceive a Master of Science in Microbiology with a concentration in biological safety. There is a requirement for residency, biological safety courses, a practicum (designed to give students supervised practical application of a previously studied theory), and completion of a thesis. The 2007 Biosafety and Biosecurity Training course session was completed during July 6-13, 2007 and addressed general, animal and plant issues related to biosafety. Registration information can be viewed at: www.cvmbs.colostate.edu/microbiology/crwad/relatedmeetings.htm.

If you're interested in this program, please contact Bob at Robert.Ellis@ColoState.EDU for current and additional information.

ABSA seeks your support, and I continuously seek your comments and suggestions that will be brought to the attention of your Council. Please let me know if you have any issues to be addressed, or if you wish to be involved with any committees or programs.

BMBL Comments from the ABSA Technical and Regulatory Review Committee

The ABSA Technical and Regulatory Review Committee has conducted a comprehensive review of the online version of the 5th Edition of the *Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories* (BMBL). To read the full report of the comments provided to the 5th Edition BMBL Steering Committee, please visit www.absa.org/resrevcom.html



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