

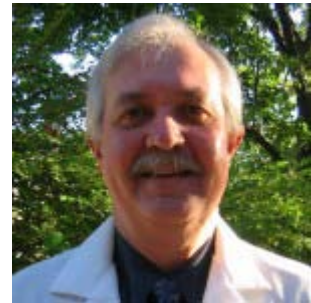
Message from the President:

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A Satisfying Life: Membership in AACT

Sometimes the daily grind of activities and details may distract us from the real joy and excitement in clinical toxicology, the reason we went down this path in the first place. Taking yet another telephone consultation, sitting through another committee meeting, working through another budget, teaching another class, taking another overnight in the emergency department or poison control center, working through the daily to-do list, answering one more e-mail. The drumbeat of day-to-day work is always softly beating in the background. However the bottom line for most of us is that a satisfying professional life, one filled with intellectual challenges and attainable goals, is a life fulfilled. And to my mind a key to that satisfying life is the professional home we enjoy in the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology.



It's membership renewal time in the AACT, when we ask for your support and your dollars and you naturally ask what you get in return. It's a time when we renew our commitment to each other and to our goals professionally. Time to go back to the original mission of the AACT:

...uniting scientists and clinicians in the advancement of research, education, prevention and treatment of diseases caused by chemicals, drugs and toxins.

This is a commitment that rises above the daily grind of details and committee meetings and telephone calls. We believe in the mission of the AACT and we respond gladly to its promise of life-long learning and collegial relationship-building. Did you enjoy the incredible symposia, social networking opportunities, exhibits, and original research presented at the outstanding NACCT meeting in Denver, Colorado this year? Time to renew. Do you read our internationally acclaimed journal *Clinical Toxicology* or the newly formatted and expanded *AACTion* newsletter? Time to renew. Are you planning or carrying out a basic or clinical research project in toxicology? Time to renew. Do you teach nurses or pharmacists or fellows or residents some of the fundamentals of clinical toxicology in a lecture or in the poison center or at the bedside and are always looking to update yourself in your field of expertise? Time to renew.

The Academy continues to make good on its promise to members of new activities and opportunities that add value to membership. We are sponsoring two new special interest groups that members can join and take advantage of: the **Food Safety SIG** (chair: Dr. Michael Greenberg) and the **Toxicological History Society** (chair: Dr. Bryan Judge). These are wonderful additions to the larger umbrella AACT organization. Food safety is a front burner public health topic and covers an incredible number of topics, including food-borne disease, genetically engineered food, irradiated food, trace contaminants, etc.

I want to add just an additional word about the Toxicological History Society, which Dr. John Trestrail, formerly of the Michigan poison control center in Grand Rapids (now retired), founded more than a dozen years ago. Since then we have witnessed a tremendous increase in the interest and scholarly work by AACT members in all sorts of topics the history of toxicological science. The Society has sponsored an annual symposium at NACCT and this year also presented the Toxicology History Room, featuring a number of tapestry-posters on historical points of interest in toxicology. It was with great pleasure that I announced recently that the AACT Board of Trustees had enthusiastically voted to recognize and sponsor formally the Society, carried on so ably these past few years since Dr. Trestrail's retirement by his friend and colleague, Dr. Bryan Judge. Bryan tells me he has many new, ambitious activities planned for the AACT's Toxicological History Society, and already has symposium speakers and topics lined up for the NACCT sessions through the year 2015!

We support our professional Academy because we always aspire to a life fulfilled in clinical toxicology, because we share each other's interests in all aspects of poisoning and poison prevention, be it the history of toxicology or occupational and environmental toxins or pediatric toxicology or acute poisoning diagnosis and management or the toxicity of herbs and dietary supplements, or the unpredictability of snake venoms or our curiosity about forensics or our interest in emergency preparedness and weapons of mass destruction or our expertise in radiation safety or our interest in food safety.

We have made renewal of membership in AACT easier than it has ever been. We have a new management team in place at Degnon Associates in McLean, Virginia, with Sarah Shiffert as our executive director and Christine Lusk as our association manager. Laura Degnon, a vice-president in the firm, oversees the team as our executive consultant. Our management team has helped us to streamline the process of renewal. You can download the renewal form and renew by mail by sending in a check or renew and pay on-line at www.clintox.org. Take a minute now and do it while you're thinking about it.

And so, yes, it is renewal time in the calendar cycle of AACT and we ask for your support and your participation in the Academy because you too want to lead a satisfying life, a life fulfilled professionally, and this, indeed, is the very best way to accomplish that.