

# USTUR NEWSLETTER

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## Direct from the Director

Last year I promised to keep you updated on events dedicated to the upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Registries (in 2018). I am very pleased to tell you that the Department of Energy (DOE) provided \$30,000 to support these events.

For the first time, a one-day USTUR special session was organized during the Health Physic Society Meeting. The session's topic was "USTUR: Five Decade Follow-up of Plutonium and Uranium Workers". Dr. Patricia Worthington, Director of the Office of Health and Safety, within the Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security at DOE, gave the welcome speech. Dr. Worthington emphasized that this event "is dedicated to the Registrants and their Families, who gave an ultimate gift to enhance the understanding of actinide elements in man." She also acknowledged that "it was recognized [by Atomic Energy Commission] from the beginning that the Registry [Plutonium at that time] is a long-term project" and today DOE, as AEC's successor, has a full commitment to the Registries. In addition to eleven scientific talks and a roundtable discussion, an informational booth was hosted by the USTUR. I am pleased to say that the USTUR session was successful given that more than 100 scientists attended the event.

We will publish all scientific presentations from the meeting as a special issue of the *Health Physics* journal (HPJ). This will be the fifth special issue of *Health Physics* dedicated to USTUR research. The first USTUR special issue was published in 1983, followed by publications in 1985, 1992, and 1995. You will find more information about the special session and the informational booth in this newsletter, and I am sure I will have more to tell you about the Registries' 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year.

Sergei Y. Tolmachev



Maia Avtandilashvili, Margo Bedell, Sara Dumit, Sergei Tolmachev, Stacey McComish, George Tabatadze, Elizabeth Thomas

## In This Issue

- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Activities
- Welcome new SAC members
- Graduate research
- Former Worker Medical Screening Program
- Introducing the HPS roundtable participants



Margo Bedell talks to visitors at the USTUR's informational booth.

## Informational Booth

The USTUR hosted a 2-day informational booth at the 2016 Health Physics Society meeting. USTUR staff answered questions about the Registries, and handed out informational brochures. The booth's purpose was to maintain visibility of the USTUR among HPS members, and to introduce ourselves to those who were not familiar with the Registries.

## Special Session

The USTUR held a one-day special session at the 2016 Health Physics Society meeting. The session, "USTUR: Five Decade Follow-up of Plutonium Workers," featured eleven presentations and a roundtable discussion (see page 4). Two keynote presentations summarized the largest recorded  $^{241}\text{Am}$  deposition in a human, and explored "where we have been and where we are going." The remaining nine presentations showcased current research that is being carried out by USTUR faculty members, as well as by national and international external collaborators. Topics included the use of chelating agents, such as DTPA, to remove plutonium from the human body, and the importance of plutonium binding in the lungs.

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the USTUR

The year 2018 will mark 50 years of research at the USTUR. In honor of this upcoming milestone, and the Registries' continued impact in the field of radiation protection, the USTUR is organizing several special activities, which will highlight the importance of USTUR research and increase the USTUR's visibility in the scientific community.

During the 2015 Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting, the USTUR proposed the following activities:

1. Conduct a one-day special session on the USTUR's research, "USTUR: Five Decade Follow-up of Plutonium and Uranium Workers," at the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Health Physics Society (HPS), Spokane, WA. (2016)
2. Host a USTUR booth at the HPS annual meeting. (2016)
3. Publish a special issue of the Health Physics journal. (2017)
4. Publish an extension of the previous book of USTUR publications, which spanned the years 1968-1996. (2018)

The SAC members strongly supported these activities, and the USTUR proposed to the Department of Energy (DOE) that these events be carried out during 2016 to 2018. In response, the DOE awarded the USTUR an additional \$30,000 to sponsor the series of commemorative events.

The one-day special session and the informational booth were completed in July as a part of the 2016 Health Physics Society meeting.

## Welcome New SAC Members!

We would like to welcome Arthur “Bill” Stange and Heather Hoffman to the USTUR’s Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC).

Dr. Stange is the Manager of Health Studies for Oak Ridge Associated Universities, and is responsible for health studies data collection, epidemiologic analyses, and publication of findings for the National Supplemental Screening Program (NSSP), a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Former Worker Medical Screening Program.

Dr. Hoffman is an associate professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the George Washington University, Milken Institute School of Public Health, Washington, DC.

The SAC has been an important part of the USTUR for decades. At annual advisory committee meetings, the SAC makes recommendations on how the USTUR can reach its full potential during the upcoming year.

## Graduate Research



WSU pharmaceutical sciences student, Sara Dumit, is studying the removal of plutonium from the human body during treatment with chelating agents such as Ca-EDTA and CA/Zn-DTPA. These chelating agents bind to plutonium in the blood, and enhance its excretion from the body. They also reduce the amount of plutonium in the liver. Ms. Dumit earned a BS degree in pharmacy from Universidade Estácio de Sá (UNESA), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In 2014, she was awarded a Science without Borders Scholarship sponsored by the Brazilian Federal Government (CAPES) to pursue a PhD degree at the College of Pharmacy, WSU.

## Former Worker Medical Screening Program

You may be eligible for medical screening through the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Former Worker Medical Screening Program (FWP). The FWP provides ongoing medical screening examinations, at no cost, to all interested former DOE Federal, contractor, and subcontractor workers from all DOE sites, as well as former workers from its predecessor Agencies (the Manhattan Engineer District, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the Energy Research and Development Administration). Established in 1996, the FWP is designed to detect diseases or conditions at an early stage, often before symptoms develop. FWP does not provide follow-up care, so Individuals with suspicious findings are referred to their personal physicians for further care.

For more information, visit the FWP website at <http://energy.gov/ehss/services/worker-health-and-safety/former-worker-medical-screening-program> or call the DOE FWP Program Manager, Mary Fields, at (301) 903-1613.

A brochure with detailed information about the FWP is available on the web at:

[http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2014/12/f19/fwp\\_brochure.pdf](http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2014/12/f19/fwp_brochure.pdf)



# Introducing the Roundtable Participants



**Margery Swint**

USTR/USUR  
director  
(1982-1989)

Topic: receiving  
the first whole  
body donation.



**Ronald Kathren**

USTUR director  
(1989-1999)

Topic: moving the  
Registries from  
Hanford to WSU.



**Ronald Filipy**

USTUR director  
(1999-2005)

Topic: USTUR col-  
laboration with the  
Russian Radiobio-  
logical Human Tis-  
sue Repository.



**James McInroy**

Director of radio-  
chemistry at Los  
Alamos

Topic: autopsy  
studies at Los  
Alamos.



**Robert Bistline**

SAC member  
(2007-2016)

Topic: early days  
of the Registry at  
Rocky Flats.



**Roger McClellan**

SAC member  
(2010-present)

Topic: early days  
of the Registry, a  
personal perspec-  
tive.

\*Bryce Breitenstein, USTR director (1976-1982), was unable to attend. The roundtable was moderated by Richard Toohey, associate director (1993-1994), SAC chair (2012-present)

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Presenters and chairs of the USTUR's special session at the Health Physics Society meeting, "USTUR: Five Decade Follow-up of Plutonium and Uranium Workers"